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ABSTRACT

Ideas and experiences to assist in working with 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old children are provided in this staff development module for the caregiver or teacher in a military child care center. The module consists of several short discussions describing characteristics of preschoolers, ways they can be helped to feel secure, and the manner in which their health and safety can be protected. Suggestions are also made with regard to satisfying preschoolers' need for structure, encouraging their exploratory behavior, and letting them know that they are cared for. Following each discussion are multiple-choice skill-building exercises which describe realistic situations including preschool children, provide alternative ways to handle each situation, and give feedback on choices made. Provided at the beginning and end of the module are exercises for self-evaluation. (RH)

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Caring For Preschoolers

Staff Development Series

Military Child Care Project

PS013117

April 1982

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FOREWORD

This series of manuals for Child Care Givers on DoD Installations is issued under the authority of DoD Instruction 6060.1, "Training Manuals for Child Care Givers on DoD Installations," January 19, 1981. Its purpose is to provide child care givers with training materials that include the latest techniques and procedures for the safe care and guiding development of children entrusted to their care.

This series of manuals, DoD 6060.1-M-1 through DoD 6060.1-M-17, was developed under the auspices of the Department of Health and Human Services by the Department of Army, in cooperation with the Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps.

The provisions of this series of manuals apply to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, and the Defense Agencies (hereafter referred to as DoD Components) whose heads shall ensure that the manuals are distributed or otherwise made available to all child care givers on DoD installations and that these materials are used in regional and inter-Service workshops, seminars, and training sessions.

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Caring For Preschoolers

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Staff Development Series

Military Child Care Project

Ft. Lewis, Washington

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INTRODUCTION

WELCOME to a staff development module written for the "caregiver" or "teacher" in a military child care center. Thoughts, ideas and experiences for working with three, four, and five year old children will be shared with you in this module, Caring For Preschoolers.

Self-paced instruction will be used in this module to allow you to work on your own and at your own pace. A small amount of discussion about caring for preschoolers is given in each section. Following the discussion, situations that really have taken place with preschool children in child care centers are provided. We provide you choices of ways to handle each situation. Then, when you flip the page, you will find why we think one answer is better than the others. We recognize that often the right answer is easier to choose when a caregiver has the opportunity to view the real situation with the real child. Our hope in presenting these situations is that you have time to think, before some of these situations occur on the job in the child care center.

This module, Caring For Preschoolers, will tell you what preschoolers are like and how you can provide for their needs.

Preschoolers are steadily growing and are very active.

So

Preschoolers need HEALTH AND NUTRITIONAL GUIDANCE to support healthy growth.

Preschoolers are dependent on adults.

So

Preschoolers need SECURITY in order to develop the confidence to explore and trust their world.

Preschoolers <u>are</u> curious and receptive to learning.

So

Preschoolers <u>need</u> FREEDOM to learn by observing, questioning and experimenting.

Preschoolers <u>are</u> comfortable when they know what to expect.

So

Preschoolers <u>need</u> STRUCTURE to provide a stable, familiar world.

Preschoolers <u>are</u> sensitive.

So

Preschoolers <u>need</u> COMPASSION as they learn to handle their feelings.

Preschoolers <u>are</u> individuals.

So

Preschoolers <u>need</u> care that recognizes DEVELOPMENTAL DIFFERENCES among children and provides for each child's individual needs.

Preschoolers <u>are</u> alert, open-minded and eager.

So

Preschoolers <u>need</u> CHALLENGE to perform at their highest capacity.

Before you begin this module we have included a preview of a few situations with choices of ways to handle them that you may try. Read the situation, choose the best answer and circle it. You may then wish to compare your answer with ours (see page 191). Since you are just beginning, work slowly and remember it is the purpose of this module to allow you to practice making some decisions about your actions in working with children. We recognize that your experiences in working with preschoolers will be unique. However, actions that have worked for other caregivers may give you some ideas for handling situations that you may face.

At the end of the module, you will find another set of situations and ways to handle them. It will be interesting and exciting for you to check yourself on what you have learned by comparing the answers you select on the Preview before you read the module with the ones you select in the Postview at the end of the module.

Here are the situations with choices of possible ways to handle them which we promised you. Think about each situation and then circle what you believe to be the best way to handle the situation. When you have finished, you may want to compare your answers with ours (see page 191). By doing this, you will have some idea of what you will learn in this module about the caregiver's role in a child care center.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF . . .

1. Tim, an active five year old, is pushing the merry-go-round extremely fast. The other children are delighted, but you believe the fast speed of the merry-go-round is dangerous. As a caregiver, you say:

   A. "Tim, we only push the merry-go-round as fast as we can walk. Slow down and walk while you push it. This way no one can be thrown off it because of the fast speed."

   B. "Tim, on this playground, we only push the merry-go-round as fast as we can walk. You may not push it anymore if you cannot follow that rule."

   C. "Tim, slow down so no one gets hurt."

2. At group time, Ryan tells the other children he has ten older brothers playing on a professional football team. You know that Ryan has only a baby sister. As a caregiver, you say:

   A. "Ryan, it is fun to think of people we would like to have in our families. Children, let's all think of people we would like to include in our families."

   B. "Ryan, I know you have a baby sister. Why don't you tell us about some of the funny things she does?"

   C. "Ryan, I think you have made up a pretend story. It is fun to pretend, isn't it?"

3. Washington, age five, has never learned to zip his jacket. You would like to help him learn this skill. As a caregiver, you say:

   A. "Washington, I know you are old enough to zip your jacket. Go ahead now and try."

   B. "Washington, watch me while I zip your jacket. Then you can try."

   C. "Washington, I am sure you can learn to zip your jacket. Try putting the bottom of the zipper together. If you need help, I will help you."

4. Andrea has been climbing high on a jungle gym. She falls, twisting her ankle beneath her. You look at the ankle and it appears to be swelling and turning blue. As a caregiver, you:

   A. Pick Andrea up and take her to the director for observation. Ask the other caregiver to watch your group.

   B. Stay with Andrea and comfort her. Calmly ask the other caregiver to go and get the director. Tell the other children to continue playing.

   C. Take Andrea to the isolation room and apply first aid measures immediately.

5. Most of the children have come to the center with store-bought valentines for one another. Brenda hides hers because they are homemade. As a caregiver, you say:

   A. "Brenda, homemade valentines are the best kind because they took special thought and patience to make. I know the children will like your valentines."

   B. "Boys and girls, there are many kinds of valentines. Some are bought in stores and some are made at home. All valentines are special because they tell someone you like them."

   C. "Boys and girls, Brenda has done a very special thing - she has made a valentine for each of you. Brenda, show the children your valentines."

6. Amy, a young three year old, moves from activity to activity. She often smells whatever toy she picks up. As a caregiver, you:

   A. Should realize that Amy uses her sense of smell to learn.

   B. Question Amy's father about his daughter's unusual habit.

   C. Ask the supervisor to watch Amy when this habit is most observable.

7. Tammy, who is four, snatches toys away from other children. You would like to help her learn to ask for, rather than grab, toys. As a caregiver, you say:

   A. "Tammy, I want you to learn to ask for toys you want. You will get along better with the other children if you learn to ask. Now say, 'Please may I have the truck?'"

   B. "Tammy, in this room we ask for what we want. Bobby is playing with that truck. Find another toy with which to play."

   C. "Tammy, after Bobby finishes playing with the truck, it will be your turn. All the children in this room wait their turns to play with the toys." Then stay with Tammy briefly to help her carry out the rule.

8. Albert is playing in the housekeeping area. Ginny and Debbie tell him to get out because only girls can play in the housekeeping area. How do you, as a caregiver, help the children in this situation? Say:

   A. "Boys grow up to be men who live in houses and they need to know how to clean house, cook meals and take care of children."

   B. "Albert, you may play in the block area with the trucks. When Debbie and Ginny are through playing in the house, then you can ask some boys to play in the house with you."

   C. "Sometimes boys like to play house. Let Albert be the father, and you can fix his breakfast and he can go to work."

9. Nicki and Marie "tattle" on the other children. You would like to help them learn not to tell on others. As a caregiver, you:

   A. Say, "Nicki and Marie, as the teacher here, it is my job to help the children learn the rules. Your job is to play. There is no need for you to tell on others."

   B. Say, "Nicki and Marie, I want you to mind your own business. I will help the other children learn the rules."

   C. Ignore Nicki and Marie when they come to you to "tattle." Then, praise these girls when you see them helping other children learn the rules.

10. It is lunch time and George and Bill are playing with their spaghetti instead of eating it. The other children laugh at them, which just encourages them to continue their play even though you have asked them to stop. You want the group to finish their lunch so they can get ready for nap time. What do you do about George and Bill?

   A. Tell George and Bill that they cannot finish their lunches. They must not be hungry if they only want to play with their spaghetti and not eat it. Take their plates away.

   B. Tell the boys you will give them one more chance, and if they don't start eating their food, you will not allow them to have dessert.

   C. Put the two boys at separate tables by themselves and tell them they need to eat their lunch rather than play because lunch time will soon be over and you don't want them to miss dessert.

11. Joanne, age three, has not started working on today's art activity. She appears interested but unable to choose from the pile of colored paper stacked in the center of the table. You would like to help her get started. As a caregiver, you say:

   A. "Joanne, here are two colors of paper - red and green. Choose one of these two colors."

   B. "Joanne, you may work either on the art activity or play at the water table. Now you choose which you would like to do."

   C. "Joanne, there are many pretty colors of paper from which to choose. Pick one and start working."

12. Five year olds, Glenn and Nicky, have been excluding Bobby from their soccer game. They tell him he can't play because he doesn't have soccer shoes. Bobby has come to you saying, "Make them let me play." As a caregiver, you say:

    A. "Glenn and Nicky, I want you to include Bobby in your game. It's not nice to leave people out of games."

    B. "Bobby, since they will not let you play, find something else to do - like kickball or tether ball."

    C. "Bobby, you could ask them if you can play in the shoes you are wearing. Go ask them that."

13. You are preparing to start an art activity with your three year olds. As a caregiver, which instructions would be best to use with this age group?

    A. "Choose a piece of colored paper." Wait for them to do this before giving the next direction in the art activity.

    B. "Choose a piece of paper, tear it, and paste it on your bigger sheet of paper."

    C. "Here is some green paper for you to tear and paste this way."

14. You have planned an outside activity for your group of five-year-old children. The activity includes having the children bounce different sized balls to one another. As you watch, it appears the children are spending most of the time chasing the balls. As a caregiver, you would:

    A. Call all the children over to you and begin a singing activity - choosing one of their favorite songs.

    B. Let the children use the balls in their own ways. Then, moving around from child to child, suggest another activity with the ball that would increase each child's skills with balls.

    C. Continue playing the ball activity. The children's skills will gradually improve, and they will spend less time chasing balls.

15. Bonita, a young three year old, often forgets some words when she is speaking. As a caregiver, you:

    A. Say, "Bonita, speak more slowly. Think about what you are going to say and then speak."

    B. Repeat what Bonita is saying. At the same time, include the words that she forgot to say.

    C. Recognize that Bonita is young and will learn these parts of speech as she gets older.

16. You overhear Susie, age four, telling another little girl the story of "The Three Little Pigs" as they look at the pictures in a book. You notice that Susie doesn't really have the story quite right. Should you correct her so that she and her friend know how the story really goes, or let her continue in her own way?

    A. Go over to Susie and say, "I see you are reading 'The Three Little Pigs.' Would you like me to read it with you?"

    B. Correct Susie's version politely because she needs to learn how the story really should be told.

    C. Allow Susie to continue telling the story her own way.

17. John, who is three, is spending his first day at the center. At nap time he begins to cry and is disturbing the other children. What do you do, as a caregiver?

    A. Tell John that he doesn't have to sleep, just rest, and that he is keeping all the other children awake by crying. Ask him to stop crying.

    B. Tell John that he must try to stop crying. If he continues to cry, move him to another area away from the children so his crying will not disturb them.

    C. Reassure John that his parents will pick him up after nap time, Stay with him and rub his back until he quiets down and seems to feel better.

18. Nicky and Butch have been lifting Shawna's dress. At first Shawna tells them to stop. When they continue, she comes to you, complaining. As a caregiver, you say:

    A. "Shawna, don't pay any attention to the boys and they will stop."

    B. "Nicky and Butch, I want you to stop lifting Shawna's dress; it isn't nice."

    C. "Nicky and Butch, I want you to stop lifting Shawna's dress; it bothers her. Find something else to do."

19. This is Mia's first day at the center. The other preschoolers are excitedly potato printing Christmas wrapping paper. Mia stands quietly and appears content to watch the other children do their printing. As a caregiver, you:

    A. Allow Mia to watch the activity and not participate, but offer her materials to work with.

    B. Offer Mia a picture to look at while the other children complete the printing.

    C. Sit Mia down and help her get started in printing some Christmas wrap.

20. You are teaching a small group of five year olds how to play the game, "Drop the Handkerchief." One little girl, Valerie, seems to get confused whenever it is her turn. She forgets to drop the handkerchief behind the child she has chosen to be "it," and this is upsetting the entire group. You can best help Valerie and the other children by saying:

    A. "Give me the handkerchief. We'll go inside and play a more quiet game. This game is causing too much confusion."

    B. "Valerie, first walk slowly. Then after choosing someone to be 'it', remember to drop the handkerchief behind that person before you start to run. If you like, we can go through it together."

    C. "O.K., let's all stand and be quiet, listen to me carefully, and we will go over the rules once more. Then - once we go over the rules - we will start over again and do it right."

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT OF "PRESCHOOLERS"?

A WIDE VARIETY OF ABILITIES

Children Come In All Sizes, Shapes, Colors And Speeds

Each child is different from every other child. We can talk about what the average child is like or what the normal developmental stages of children are, but we should always remember that each child is an individual with a pace all his own. Every child will have a particular rate of development socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically. It is wise to remember that when we talk about the "normal" or "average," we are talking about a broad range of behavior rather than one "right" way.

In addition, the same child may vary in the development of different behaviors. The child of three may speak like children of his age but run and jump as if he were four.

Children of the same age may be very different from each other. However, it will help if you know what to expect from each age group even if no one child within the group is quite the same as any other child. Knowing what the age group is like will help you to plan activities and to structure the routine of the day so that you can best meet the needs of most children. This knowledge also will help you guide the children by encouraging and praising them as they learn new skills.

Three Year Olds Notice Everything

The three-year-old wonders about everything. "Why?" seems to be her constant question. She uses all of her senses to learn - eyes, nose, mouth, ears. At this age the child wants to know what things are, what they're called, how they work, and how they relate to each other. These questions indicate that the child is beginning to see that the world is larger and more complex than she has believed it to be up to now.

At a child care center, a child has the chance to learn about people who are different from herself. As the child plays with other children and the caregivers, she begins to learn how people are different and how they are alike. She learns that people have different likes and dislikes and different ways of doing things.

Some of the differences she may notice are the differences in little boys and girls sexual organs or the differences in skin color or even difference in abilities. Hopefully, at this point the child will learn that to be different is not to be "better" or "worse" than someone and that differences make the world more interesting.

Remember, when the three year old notices something of interest, it is very likely that she will want to talk about this new interest. The caregiver can make curiosity work in the child's favor by making available a variety of interesting activities to help the three year old learn. Activities involving rhythms, songs or building blocks and opportunities for active play on climbers or slides can catch the three-year-old's interest.

Three's are quite verbal. They know many words and recognize more than they use. They enjoy word play, rhymes, and nonsense sounds. They ask questions. They like to talk. You can help their language development by talking with them, and by encouraging them to talk with you.

Threes are also at varying stages of language development. Some may be using full sentences and talking quite well. Others may be leaving out verbs, nouns or pronouns and talking "baby talk." As a caregiver, you need to help these children develop better language skills. This can be done by repeating what they have said in a full sentence when they are talking to you alone. When they are in a group, however, it probably is better to let them talk without correcting or repeating what they have said. Children learn to talk by hearing others talk. Give them lots of opportunities to talk and to listen to others in the group talk. They will soon learn correct speech and will be proud of themselves.

Four And Five Year Olds
See Relationships

The child of four and five is beginning to be concerned with grouping things. He will group objects by how they relate to each other or by how they are similar. This is a time when the child will notice that cats and dogs are both animals, that apples and oranges are fruit, and that these buttons are small, while those are large.

The caregiver can provide activities that encourage discovery. This can be done by helping the child talk about what he sees, feels, and thinks. "Finding Out Activities" are fun and useful ways of helping the child explore his world. Ask questions:

. What is inside the orange?
. What happens if you pour salt in the water?

When a child asks you a question and you have to say, "I don't know," add, "but let's see if we can find out." Another activity which encourages discovery is "Play-Acting" or "Let's Pretend." Ask the child questions about his pretend world. "What would you do if you were in the Army?" "What would you do if you were a farmer?" "What would it be like if everything were blue?"

Four year olds love words and word games. They like to do things in groups but may not have a long enough attention span to sit still for a very long time. They ask more questions than it seems possible could be in one little head.

Fours usually can and do use complete sentences when talking to one person. However, their minds are full of things they want to say and often they cannot speak as fast as they think, particularly in groups. Their words may become twisted and often fours begin to talk so fast that they stutter. They want to tell the group everything they are thinking and it is frustrating to them not to have people listen. Fours are so busy thinking of what they want to say that they are not very good listeners when other children are talking. If a child does begin to stutter when talking to the group, it is best to give him plenty of time to talk. Reassure him with a look and touch that you are willing to wait while he finishes everything he wants to say. This usually solves the problem.

Three Year Olds Are Learning To Manage Their Bodies

The three year old is usually in a state of steady growth. her body is more manageable than it was at two. Her balance is improving, and she can stand on one foot for short periods of time. Large muscles are developing; she can run and jump easily. She has more control over what she can do now. Pedaling a trike is easier and so is climbing. The three-year-old's small muscle development and coordination is

also improving. She can put puzzles together and draw with more control over the materials.

The three year old is extremely busy. She hurries everywhere. Her attention span is still rather short, but her interests are beginning to expand. Since she is so active, the three year old will need a midday rest even if she doesn't always fall asleep.

Three's are potty trained and usually can take care of their own toilet needs. Sometimes accidents will happen, but the child should not be punished. Three year olds want to develop control over their body functions.

Fours And Fives Like To Use Their Physical Skills

This is a time of slow, steady growth. By this age the child is getting quite skilled at using his body and the "tools" of his world. He can run fast. He can jump and climb with ease and confidence. His balance is well developed and he also can walk heel-to-toe for quite a few steps without falling. This increased muscle development is shown by the amount of movement and physical contact the four's have with each other. They push and wrestle and fall on top of each other.

The four-year-old's small muscle control also is improving, but on the whole, he is restless. He likes games that have a lot of movement. He holds brushes, pencils and crayons as adults do, but has trouble sitting still long enough to do this.

He can button and unbutton his clothes and perhaps even lace his shoes. And he is beginning to develop skills in cutting with scissors and may even begin to favor one hand over the other. He can use his eyes and hands together to do what he wants, although this skill still is not up to adult standards.

Five year olds have even more control over their bodies. They like activities that use their large muscles - things like bouncing balls, racing, running or riding trikes on obstacle courses. They can hop on one foot, skip, climb ladders with ease, and even catch small balls. The five year old has a longer attention span than he did at four, but still is unable to sit for long periods of time.

Three Year Olds Are Just Learning To Share

Young children want what they want, when they want it. This is normal. As they move away from their home and out into the world, they are presented with the problem of learning how to get along with other people. Learning to share toys and attention, and even food.

The child of three usually needs help in learning to share. Her feelings are less consciously under control and her needs and wants are more immediate than those of older children.

The caregiver can help the child of three learn to share by praising her efforts or simply noticing and remarking when she does share. A time table for taking turns can help. If both Jane and Michael want to ride the trike, Jane might agree to push the wheelbarrow for awhile. Then, on a signal from the caregiver, they trade. In this way, the caregiver has given Michael a short time on the trike and then asked him to switch and share it with Jane. The caregiver should assure Michael that he can have another turn on the trike later if he wishes.

Fours And Fives Still Need Guidance In Social Situations

The child of four usually knows how to share, but may need the caregiver's encouragement to do so. The child of five usually shares readily. Encouragement to share can come in the form of praise saying, "I like the way you share."

Encouragement like this can take the place of many rules about being polite. When a child says, "please," and you notice it, you will get many more "pleases." On the other hand, asking a child to say, "I'm sorry," may encourage dishonesty if the child does not feel that way. Instead, tell the child to speak about his feelings. This does not mean he can hit Billy, but it may mean he can say, "I feel like hitting you, Billy." After saying this, he can follow through with your instructions on how he and Billy can share the truck.

Three Year Olds Are Happy With Themselves

The three year olds usually are happy with themselves. They are becoming more sociable. If you watch a group of three year olds, you might see small groups of them playing together, talking about what they are doing, beginning to learn to share with each other. They are interested in other people and often will show concern if

another child has hurt himself. They also are interested in each other's bodies.

The three year old likes the repetition of familiar stories. He loves to hear them told or read over and over again. He also may have make-believe animals or playmates who play with him or have adventures of his own.

Children of three are eager to please and to learn. Sometimes, though, they will try to call attention to themselves by showing off. Other times their fears about the still largely unknown world will make them seek out the comfort of a familiar lap. Remember, three year olds are still little children. They sometimes may have trouble leaving their mother. They tire easily and probably still will need to nap.

Four's Want To Do It All And May Feel Frustrated

The four year old can be quite unhappy with herself at times. She is beginning to see how big the world is, how much there is to learn and do. Her ideas often can be bigger than her ability to do them, and she will become frustrated. The four year old has a great deal of energy but can be over stimulated easily. Many times you will be able to see this contradiction between what the four year old can think to do and what she actually can do. She will get involved in difficult activities and then get frustrated because she can't make them "go right." She is sociable and likes to play with other children but can be bossy or not want to share. Her behavior goes "out of bounds" easily both in what she does and says. This is the age that children start using "not-so-nice" words and calling each other names.

Four year olds have good imaginations and can develop fears of the dark or animals or sometimes strangers.

Other people are becoming very important to the four year old. She may have a "best friend" now or be impressed by people in the news or on TV. At the same time, she still might be reluctant to leave her mother and sometimes will need holding by a friendly adult.

Fives Feel Good About Their Abilities

By the age of five most children are beginning to gain the skills they need to put their ideas into action. They are enjoying life and themselves and so are fun to be with.

Five year olds are more apt to follow the rules and to want to do what is right. They play well with other children. By now, they've learned to share and respect the rights of others. They are developing a concern for the feelings of their playmates and the value of playing fairly. What is nice about five year olds is that they still enjoy being with an adult. They will let the caregiver know this, with a hug or an occasional, "I love you."

All Children Need Guidance And Support As They Grow

Whether the children are three, four, or five, they need the caregiver's support and encouragement. The caregiver should get to know "her" children in the room and their capabilities. As each child takes another step in mastering a skill or learning something new, the child needs encouragement. Knowing when to encourage a child in his growth requires the caregiver to know what the child already can do. This means knowing each child as an individual.

BUILDING SKILLS
IN SUPPORTING
PRESCHOOLERS' DEVELOPMENT

. . . Some Often Asked Questions
And
Situations To Explore

HOW CAN YOU HELP PRESCHOOLERS DEVELOP SOCIAL SKILLS?

Preschoolers are exploring relationships with other children. They are learning what behavior is acceptable and what behavior is unacceptable in social relationships. The child of three, four, and five wants to be accepted and will do things to get attention from other children. Adults may have difficulty coping with this "attention-getting-behavior." It does help to remember that a preschooler wants you and the other adults in his life to like him. Your job as a caregiver is to help the child develop social skills that are acceptable to both the adults and children in his life. You can do this by praising him when he behaves in a socially acceptable manner. Remember, he learns what is acceptable by watching the behavior of other children and adults. If you are accepting and understanding in your relationships, he is more likely to be accepting and understanding. If you ask, rather than demand, he is more likely to ask. You are a model for the preschooler. If you show him - through your own actions - how you want him to behave, you are helping him develop social skills.

WHAT WOULD YOU
DO IF . . .

Josh, who is four, likes to collect several toys around him and then objects loudly if another child tries to play with any of them. Jim comes over and picks up a truck that Josh has near him. Josh grabs the toy and yells, "That's mine." How can you help Josh share? Say:

A. "Josh, you aren't playing with that truck so give it to Jim."

B. "Josh, since you aren't playing with the truck, let Jim play with it for a little while. When Jim is finished playing he will switch toys with you and you will have a turn with the truck."

C. "Jim, that is one of Josh's favorite trucks. Why don't you find another truck to play with? I'll help you find one."

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You are having a story time with ten four year olds. You see that two children, Louise and Carlos, keep talking to the other children and moving to different spots on the rug. This is distracting to everyone. You have ignored their behavior but it has done no good. What do you do now?

A. Go over to Louise and Carlos, ask them to leave the group and sit in the time out chairs until they can listen to the story properly.

B. Say, "Louise and Carlos, please sit down and don't talk. You are disturbing everyone. I can't read and the children can't listen to the story when you are talking and moving around. This is a really good story and I know you'll enjoy it. Sit down and be quiet for the rest of story time."

C. Say, "Louise and Carlos, at story time we sit and listen quietly. You will have to leave the group if you can't do this."

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not a good solution because Josh is not being taught anything about how to share. He is only being forced to share - which teaches him nothing.

Choice B is the best answer because you are helping Josh to share and also reassuring him that he will have a turn with the truck.

Choice C is allowing Josh to continue not to share and teaching him nothing. He and Jim will not become friends this way.

Georgia is five years old and loves to tell the other children what to do. She always wants the children to play her way. Today, in the block area, there is a problem because Georgia tells the rest of the children that they must all build houses. When two of the children refuse, she tells them they can't play with the blocks. How do you help Georgia learn not to be bossy? Say:

A. "Georgia, you are not the teacher, I am. I say the children can build whatever they want. You must stop being so bossy."

B. "Georgia, in the block area, each person chooses what to build. The children wouldn't like it if I told them they all had to build the same thing, and they don't like it when you tell them that. Now you may build what you want, and I'll come back in a few minutes to see what you've built."

C. "Georgia, the children won't like you if you are bossy. If you want them to like you, try to be nicer to them."

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is a poor choice because you have not explained the proper behavior to Louise and Carlos. You have punished them and they may not understand why.

Choice B is more acceptable, but you have gone into too long an explanation. You should not take that much time away from the story because this will make the other children become restless.

Choice C is the best answer because you have given a short explanation of the correct behavior at story time. You also have told Louise and Carlos what will happen if they can't follow the rules. The other children will not become restless during this brief explanation.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not a good thing to say because you are "putting down" Georgia and not telling her the proper behavior.

Choice B is the best solution because you have explained to her why her behavior is wrong, without "putting her down." You also have let the rest of the children know that it is all right to build what they want. By returning to the block area in a few minutes, you can make sure that things are going well by saying, "My I really like all the different buildings I see."

Choice C will solve nothing because you have not explained what the proper behavior is to Georgia. You have probably made her feel badly and "put her down" in the eyes of the other children.

HOW CAN YOU HELP PRESCHOOLERS DEVELOP PHYSICAL SKILLS?

Preschoolers are active. They like to try everything. Often they find that they are unable to do all the things they would like. You, as a caregiver, must choose activities at which they can succeed. This means being aware of the skills of each child, if at all possible.

Three year olds are beginning to develop good small muscle skills, but using scissors may be difficult for them. Coloring inside the lines also is difficult and not necessary. Three year olds like to run, jump, and climb. They also like throwing and rolling balls, but have trouble catching that same ball.

Four year olds have developed better small muscle skills. They can use crayons and brushes to paint. Coloring inside the lines, however, is still not easy for them, nor is it important. They may be more successful with scissors, but most will have trouble cutting out pictures. Their large muscle skills are getting better and better, and they can now hop on one foot and climb up and down easily on the bars. Many will be able to catch a ball and throw it back to you, but controlling a bouncing ball is still difficult.

Five year olds want to try everything. Their small and large muscle skills are quite good. Some still will have trouble skipping, and you can help them. The most important thing to remember with this age group is that there will be great differences in their abilities. You must accept five year olds where they are and help them develop at their own pace. Plan games and activities that allow them to practice and develop both large and small muscle skills.

WHAT WOULD YOU
DO IF . . .

Jamie is a well coordinated three year old who climbs well. However, you are not sure if she can climb down as well as climb up the bars. When she asks to climb up "high," what do you do?

A. Allow Jamie to climb high. There are mats under the bars, and this is a good way for Jamie to test her skills.

B. Allow Jamie to climb up two steps and then climb back down again. If she is able to do this, then let her attempt to climb up three steps and down again.

C. Tell Jamie that you don't want her to fall or get scared. Say that you know she can climb up well but are not sure how well she can climb down. Ask her to wait until she is four before climbing that high.

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You are playing a game with your five year olds. You throw the ball to them and they throw it back to you. Alex always seems to miss catching the ball and it is really slowing down the game. What can you do?

A. When you throw the ball to Alex, show him how to hold his hands to catch the ball. Move closer to him when you throw the ball so he will have a better chance of catching it.

B. Even if it slows up the game, continue throwing the ball to Alex and he will learn through practice how to catch. This way he will not be embarrassed by your calling attention to his lack of skill.

C. Tell Alex since he is having trouble catching the ball he should find some other place to play. Say you will help him learn to catch later when the game is over.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not a good idea because you are not really sure of her climbing ability. She may climb high and then sit there afraid to climb back down. You will be forced to go after her, and this could result in both of you falling. Help children develop skills gradually.

Choice B is the best answer because you are allowing Jamie to test her skills in a safe way. Both of you can then gradually find out how high she can climb and then come back down comfortably.

Choice C does not help Jamie extend her skills. She may very well be able to climb "high" and get back down safely.

You have given your four-year-old group a picture of a bird to color. You notice that some of the children are staying in the lines and coloring very well, but Nancy and Leon are having difficulty and seem unhappy that they cannot stay within the lines. How do you help them?

A. Go over to Nancy and Leon and draw heavier, darker lines on their paper - so it will be easier to stay within the lines.

B. Tell Nancy and Leon it is all right if they do not stay within the lines. Ask them if they would like to have a piece of paper to draw their own picture. Allow the other children to have a piece of paper to draw their own pictures, also.

C. Tell Nancy and Leon to slow down and take their time. Say you know it is hard to stay inside the lines but if they take their time, you are sure they can do it.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is the best choice because you are helping Alex be successful in the group game. Even though you are giving him special help, this is less embarrassing than allowing him to continue to miss the ball or asking him to leave the game.

Choice B is unwise because Alex will be very embarrassed at his lack of skill and the other children will probably tease him. You are not helping Alex learn to catch.

Choice C is a poor solution because you are calling attention to Alex's lack of skill and are sending him away from a game he could learn to play and enjoy.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not the best answer because you have drawn on their picture, which is not a good idea. Also, Nancy and Leon may still have trouble staying within the lines. Your first mistake was in giving the group a picture to color. Coloring an already-drawn picture is not creative and can be very frustrating.

Choice B is the preferable solution because even though it was a mistake to give the children an already-drawn picture, you are now allowing them to have the choice of drawing their own picture.

Choice C is not the wisest choice because while slowing down may help Nancy and Leon do a better job of staying within the lines, they still will be frustrated.

HOW CAN YOU HELP PRESCHOOLERS LEARN AND EXPLORE?

Preschoolers are questioning everything around them. They learn best through their senses. Activities should involve seeing, hearing, tasting, touching and smelling. In working with preschoolers, provide the proper materials and allow them to experiment. Then be close by to answer questions and comment on what they are doing. Allow them to discover, talk about what they are learning and grow at their own rate.

Three year olds are developing a large vocabulary and like to learn new words. Through songs and stories you can help them increase the number of words they use. They can learn the names for animals and their babies. Three year olds may have trouble saying new words correctly and certain sounds such as "l" and "r" may be difficult for them. They enjoy simple puzzles, blocks, play dough, and painting activities.

Four year olds are able to use more words and like to learn the names for colors and shapes. They are able to tell you which things are round, square or rectangular. They can learn to identify fruit by name and color. Four year olds like to do harder puzzles (10-15 pieces) and enjoy building with small blocks that fit and stay together.

Five year olds are getting it all together. They are expanding their minds to include the world around them. They are eager to try out new ideas. They like to combine activities when they play. Sometimes it's fun to have water or play dough in the housekeeping area or allow them to use cars and trucks in the block area. Their eye-hand coordination is better, and they usually are able to combine activities - cut, fold and color during one project. Five year olds seem to be saying, "Hello world, you're wonderful and so am I."

WHAT WOULD YOU
DO IF . . .

Christine, who is five, has an active imagination and likes to share it with others. She knows you realize she is making up stories. Should you explain that her stories are not true and that it is not a good idea to make up stories?

A. Yes, because someone might call her a liar and really embarrass her. You should try to keep this from happening.

B. No, there is nothing wrong with children using their imaginations. You might say, "Christine, I know that is a pretend story and it's really fun to pretend. If you are going to tell your story to someone else, you probably should tell them it's a pretend story, too."

C. Tell Christine that you don't mind her making up stories but that since they are not true, she better not tell her stories to anyone else.

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Lance is playing a shape-matching game. You notice that instead of matching shapes, he is matching colors. Should you correct him or let him continue in his own way?

A. Correct Lance because he needs to learn shapes and this game will help him.

B. Go over to Lance and say, "I see you are matching colors, Lance. Would you like me to get you a color-matching game. This is a shape-matching game."

C. Allow Lance to continue in his own way.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is unwise because it discourages Christine's imagination.

Choice B is the best choice because it recognizes Christine's imaginative ability and also helps her tell others that she is pretending.

Choice C is not a good solution because it makes pretending and imagining seem like bad things to do.

You are having a music time with records with your three-year-old group. You have had them listen to a record for quite a while and identify different animal sounds. Sara gets up and walks over to look at a book. Should you bring Sara back or let her go?

A. Allow Sara to leave and go to another quiet activity. She may not be able to pay attention as long as the other children.

B. Stop the music time and change activities. If Sara is bored, the other children probably are, too.

C. Ask Sara to come back to the group and finish listening to the record. It is important at group time that all the children do the same thing.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not the wisest choice because it is a good idea to allow children to explore different ways to use a game.

Choice B is not a good answer because you are again being rigid in the way the children must play a game. You are not allowing Lance to experiment.

Choice C is the best answer because you are allowing Lance to experiment. He may match colors and then go on to matching shapes with the same game.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is the best answer because Sara's attention span may be shorter than the other children's. If the rest of the group is interested in the record activity, continue it and watch for signs of boredom.

Choice B is not a good choice because it doesn't consider the needs of the other children. If the rest of the group still seem interested, they should be allowed to continue the activity.

Choice C will solve nothing because Sara may become wiggly and disturb the rest of the group if she has lost interest in the record. Since she has chosen a quiet activity, let her continue with it.

HOW CAN YOU HELP PRESCHOOLERS UNDERSTAND THEIR FEELINGS?

Preschoolers need help in understanding their feelings. They need to know that it is all right to express their feelings in acceptable ways. As a caregiver, you should give preschoolers the freedom to tell you how they feel. Examples of acceptable ways for preschoolers to express feelings are: telling another child that they are angry, rather than hitting; putting a hard puzzle away and getting a simpler one, rather than throwing the hard puzzle on the floor; and, telling you what is making them feel sad, rather than crying.

Three is usually a happy age. Threes are attempting new things but usually are not frustrated when something does not work. They just go on to a different activity.

Fours want to do everything and often attempt activities that are much too difficult for them. They want independence but often overstep what they are capable of doing. When this happens, they easily become frustrated and sometimes go back to temper tantrums. As a caregiver, you will find yourself having to help fours decide what they can do and accept the fact that it is all right not to be able to do everything.

Fives are pleased with the people and the world around them. They usually are capable of doing things they want to do and are not bothered by frustration. They are very concerned with playing fair and like to follow the rules of group games.

Remember in working with preschoolers that you can help them deal with their feelings only if you know what those feelings are. By encouraging children to tell you how they feel and by helping them understand it's o.k. to express their feelings, you will have a headstart in helping them handle their emotions.

WHAT WOULD YOU
DO IF . . .

Sean, who is four, wants to build a high tower with the blocks, but each time he puts the fifth block on the tower, it falls over. Finally, he becomes so frustrated, he kicks the blocks and begins yelling and crying. How can you help Sean?

A. Say, "Sean, kicking and yelling won't help. Now stop and try again. You can do it, I know."

B. Say, "Sean, I know you are angry because your tower keeps falling down. Let me see how you are building the tower and perhaps we can figure out the problem. If you kick the blocks, someone could get hurt. When you have a problem you can't work out yourself, ask for help. That way maybe the problem can be solved."

C. Say, "Sean, since you are having trouble with the blocks, why don't you play with something else. I don't want you to yell and kick the blocks."

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Nancy, who is three, has been using the bathroom with no problem. However, today she has been so busy playing outside that she waits too long and wets herself. When you go inside, you find her in the bathroom crying. You can see that she is embarrassed. How can you help Nancy?

A. Help Nancy put on dry clothes. While you are doing this, tell Nancy you know she feels badly but that it is all right to have an accident once in a while. Tell her you will explain to her mother and ask her to come inside earlier next time.

B. Tell Nancy that she should not have waited so long before coming to the bathroom. Get her some dry clothes, and don't say anything to the other children about it.

C. Help Nancy put on dry clothes and wash her face so the other children will not know she's been crying. Tell her you understand and it's o.k.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is a poor choice because you are not helping Sean with his problem and are not giving him another way to express his frustrations.

Choice B is the best answer because you recognize his feelings and are offering him help. You also are telling him how to deal with problems in the future.

Choice C is not a good solution because you are not offering Sean any help nor any ways to solve his problems.

Andy and Peter, who are five, are playing checkers. Andy is an excellent player and usually beats Peter. Today, Peter says that Andy cheats and that's why he wins all the time. Andy says that he isn't cheating and that Peter is just a bad loser. How do you help the boys solve their problem? Say:

A. "Peter, I know you don't like losing to Andy so often, but Andy is really a good player. Why don't you ask Andy if he will show you some good moves in checkers. Andy, I really think you could teach Peter more about checkers; then you both would enjoy the game more. How about trying it, boys?"

B. "Peter, it is not nice to be a poor loser. If you keep playing, you probably will get better at checkers and then maybe you can beat Andy."

C. "Andy, I'm sure you didn't cheat. Peter is just upset about losing. Now, both of you go play another game. Maybe you will win this one, Peter."

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is the preferable solution because you are reassuring Nancy and making her feel better about herself. You also are telling her how to keep from having this problem again.

Choice B is not the best answer because you are scolding Nancy and are not reassuring her. She will continue to feel badly.

Choice C is not helpful because you are not telling Nancy how to avoid the problem in the future; nor are you telling her you know how she feels.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is the best answer because you are accepting Peter's feelings and suggesting a way that both boys can play together happily, while learning at the same time. Andy will feel good about being the "teacher," and Peter will feel good about learning to play checkers better.

Choice B will solve nothing because you are not helping Peter or Andy learn how to deal with their feelings.

Choice C is not a good idea because while you are helping Andy, you are doing nothing to help Peter become a better checker player. Peter will continue to feel frustrated.

CREATE A FEELING OF TRUST

The child care center is a place away from home. It is not a home. A child care center is organized especially for the child. The center is a safe and caring world - a place to learn, to grow, and to be happy.

Be Sensitive To Their Needs

People feel secure when their needs are being met. These needs are the same for children as for adults. There are four basic areas of need: social, emotional, physical, and intellectual.

- Physical needs include the need for security, shelter, food, rest, health, and safety.
- Social needs include the need to belong to a group and to interact in positive ways with other children and adults.
- Emotional needs include the need for love, as well as the chance to learn how to express feelings and feel good about oneself.
- Intellectual needs include the need for stimulation of curiosity and imagination and the opportunity to think about and share new ideas.

One of the most important emotional needs a child has is the need for security. In order for a child to reach out for new experiences, he must trust his world and the people in it. At three, four, and five, parents are the main people in a child's life. As a result, parents are the main providers of that sense of security. However, other people and experiences can help to give a child a sense of security. For the young preschooler, a day in the child care center may be his first experience away from home. The center will become one of the important other places that will teach the child that he can trust his world and the people in it.

When a child first comes to the center, one of the most important things that he must sense is that the center is a safe place. The child needs to sense that you, the caregiver, can be trusted. The child who comes to the center, small, frightened, and feeling alone, will see that this can

be his place to grow and learn and play if there are smiling children and smiling, relaxed caregivers to help him. Cheerful colors and child-sized equipment also will say to the child that this is "my own place - a place just made for children, and that means me."

One of the things that gives young children a strong sense of security is familiarity - familiar routines, familiar faces, familiar furniture and places. The familiar provides a safe ground from which to explore the unfamiliar.

Let Them Know What To Expect

The caregiver can help the child feel secure by telling the child what is going to happen next. Of course, in order to tell the child what will happen, you must have a schedule that you follow. Scheduling will help all of the children anticipate what comes next. When children know what's coming, they can make the transition from one activity to another more easily, and get a sense that the world can be a safe and predictable place. Once they trust the safety of the world, they become more willing to experience surprises, differences, the unknown.

When giving explanations, use simple words and short sentences. Long, involved explanations confuse the child. The same is true with directions. With three year olds, give one direction at a time, and when this direction has been completed, go on to the next step. With fours you can usually give two directions at a time and they can follow through. By the time a child reaches five, you should be able to give three directions at one time. For example, "Go to the bathroom, wash your hands, and then put your coat on to go outside." As in all areas of development, children's abilities to follow directions vary. A good rule to follow is to keep directions short, clear, and simple.

MAKE THEM FEEL THAT THEY'RE "SPECIAL"

There are other ways to insure that a child feels secure in the center. When children have a "special" place for their things - their coats, their lunch sacks, their paintings - they feel

more secure. They know that in this center, which they share with everyone, at least one place is their very own.

We all respond to being liked, to having people be friendly toward us. Children are the same. They like to be called by name. They like adults who smile and are warm and friendly. These are important behaviors for caregivers to develop.

Many times all a child sees of adults is their knees. When you talk with the child, you should kneel down so that you are at the child's eye level. This is one way of telling the child that you respect her needs and feelings. As a caregiver, when you talk with a group of children, it is important that you talk with them at their eye level. You should sit, whenever possible, while talking with a group.

Almost everything a young child sees when she first comes to a center is strange and unfamiliar. When preschoolers adventure out into the world, they are reassured by the sight of familiar faces - "their teacher." When they come to the center and find the same caregiver "that was here when I was here the last time," they feel safe.

While the center cannot guarantee the same caregiver every time a child comes, this is a goal to work toward. It helps to remember that the caregivers at the center might not be the only familiar people the child sees when she's there. The neighbor whose child also attends the center, a local police officer, storekeeper, fire fighter, or military person who comes to visit the center may all become familiar faces for the preschooler.

Help Them Feel That They Belong

Children need to feel that they belong. They need to have the sense that they have a place in the group of children at the center. One way you can tell that a child feels secure in the center is if you hear him say things like "my school" or "my group." This is a child who knows he has his place in the center.

There are some easy ways for a caregiver to help a child develop a sense of belonging. Children feel that they belong when they are allowed to

help make plans for group activities. When children, as a group, help to plan something like a Valentine party, they feel that it is their party and that they belong to the group that planned it. Another way to help children feel that they belong is to give them an active part in special activities. When they are encouraged to help hide eggs for an Easter party or decorate for some special occasion they increase their sense that this is their group and their child care center.

HELP THEM UNDERSTAND WHAT IS EXPECTED

Set Clear Limits And Follow Them

When the children know what the caregiver expects of them, they feel the caregiver is concerned and cares about them. Children want to know what they can and cannot do. The caregiver should tell the children clearly how they are expected to act. And the caregiver must be prepared to help them learn how to act this way.

Rules and limits that are set and followed help the child feel secure. These limits give the child a sense that the world is reasonable and trustworthy. Children will sometimes test to see that the limits are "real." Children learn that rules can be trusted by testing them and testing you, the caregiver. This is normal behavior. It is up to you to let the child know that the rules can be trusted.

Be Patient And Understanding

Helping children learn the rules and limits of the child care center takes patience. Being patient does not mean "doing it" for the child. If a child is trying to clean up a spilled glass of juice, the caregiver doesn't patiently wipe up, too. "Helping with patience" means guiding or supporting the child's own attempts. Sometimes it means waiting while the child does what you could do in only a moment. Sometimes it means reminding her to pick up the last few toys. Patience involves both firmness and acceptance.

When children know that their efforts will be met with patience and understanding, they are not afraid to try. When they know it is all right to take time, to make mistakes sometimes, to try again, they will be able to meet new experiences

without fear. Children feel more secure when they are with a patient caregiver.

LET THEM DO THINGS FOR THEMSELVES

Create Opportunities For Children To Do Things On Their Own

Frequently we hear children say, "No, I want to do it myself." Sometimes we want to hurry children along, or not be bothered with their efforts. But children learn how to solve problems and get along in the world by "doing it themselves." Try to give children a chance to do things on their own. By giving them this chance, you say to them that you believe in them, that you believe they can grow and learn.

Opportunities to do things themselves are always present in a center. When a child comes there he can be allowed to take off his coat and hang it up. At snack time, children can help mix cookie dough or set the table. Look around and notice the many ways that you can give the children the chance to "do it themselves."

BUILDING SKILLS IN HELPING PRESCHOOLERS FEEL SECURE

. . . Some Often Asked Questions And Situations To Explore

HOW DO YOU WORK WITH GROUPS OF PRESCHOOLERS?

Children need to feel that they have a place in the center. They need to have people who know their names and who are aware of them as individuals. Children also need to have a place in their group. They feel good when other children ask them to play and choose them to participate in group games. As a caregiver, you must help the children in your group make a place for themselves. Help the shy child become more assertive by working with him to develop more confidence in his ability to take part in group activities. Help the aggressive child learn ways to handle anger and be noticed by the group. Your job as a caregiver is to help each child feel good about himself as an individual and as a member of your group.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF . . .

Josh, who is four, begins to cry when you say it is nap time. He says he doesn't want to take a nap and refuses to lie on his cot. What can you do? Say:

A. "Josh, you don't have to sleep, but I do want you to lie on your cot and rest. I will stay with you for a little while and rub your back."

B. "Josh, in this room, everyone takes a nap. It will not be a long nap and we can play when you wake up. Now I want you to lie down and go to sleep."

C. "Josh, lie down this time and rest. Next time you come to the center maybe you won't have to take a nap, but this time you do."

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Karen has just turned five and has been moved to your room from the three- and four-year-old room. Your class consists of children who are five through ten years of age. The school-aged children are in the room before and after school. Karen was very happy and well-adjusted in the younger room and you want to help her make a good adjustment in your room. How can you help her?

A. When Karen comes in, smile and say, "Hi, Karen, I'm glad to see you. You may go play in whatever area you like. We have lots of toys and things to do."

B. When Karen comes in, give her a hug and tell her you are glad to see her. Take her to the coloring table and let her draw a picture. Tell her when she is finished with the picture, she can go play with something else.

C. When Karen comes in, smile and greet her. Take her by the hand to a small group of children you feel she will be happy with. Tell the children that Karen is new to the room and ask that they show her around the room and explain the different areas to her. Keep an eye on the group to be sure Karen is included in the activities.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is the most acceptable because you are not insisting that Josh sleep. You are staying with him for a short time and perhaps with you being with him and rubbing his back, he will go to sleep. Even if he doesn't, he will at least be able to relax.

Choice B is not the wisest choice because you are insisting that Josh sleep and he is determined not to sleep. This will probably make him even more upset and tense.

Choice C is not a good solution because you are setting yourself up for a problem the next time Josh comes to the center. Josh will probably not nap well because you are not helping him relax.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is a poor solution because you are not helping Karen meet other children and become part of the group. You are leaving her too much on her own.

Choice B is not the best answer because while you are giving Karen something to do, you are still not helping her meet other children and become part of the group. Children of this age need the security of a friend.

Choice C is the best choice because you are giving Karen a chance to meet a few of the children. The other children will enjoy the responsibility of helping Karen learn about the room, and Karen will become a part of the group more quickly.

HOW DO YOU HELP CHILDREN DEVELOP SELF-CONFIDENCE AND TRUST?

We all have met children who believe they can do anything and are willing to try new activities immediately. On the other hand, we also have met other children who seem afraid to attempt new activities or, even with familiar activities, are hesitant to begin until they see what others are doing. What makes the difference in these children? How can caregivers help all children develop self-confidence? You first must be willing to allow children to make mistakes. Don't rush in and say, "Let me help you find where the puzzle piece goes," or "I'll pour the juice because it might spill." If the child cannot find where the piece goes, he'll ask for help - and if the juice spills, she can wipe it up. However, you must allow for the possibility that, given time, he'll find where the puzzle piece goes or that she may pour the juice very carefully and accurately. Praise children for what they do well and don't expect perfection. The child who has too high standards set for her may give up completely and not be willing to try anything. Remember, each child develops at his own pace and cannot be compared to other children. Allow each child to be his or her own special person without comparison to others. When explaining activities, be sure to keep the explanations simple, and do not give too many directions at one time. Be sure the activities you plan are not beyond the children's developmental level. You want the children to be successful in carrying out the activity. Let them know what materials or actions are needed in doing the activity. In most activities preschoolers are involved with, the end result--the finished product--is not as important as the steps they take in doing the activity.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF . . .

Clara is a shy four year old who has been chosen to pour juice. She is hesitant to do it. How can you, the caregiver, help Clara develop self-confidence in this activity? Say:

A. "Clara, I know you can pour the juice without spilling - go ahead and try."

B. "Clara, I know you can pour the juice. If some accidentally spills, we'll just wipe it up - so go ahead and pour it slowly."

C. "Clara, I'll hold the juice container and we'll pour the juice together. That way it probably won't spill."

Answers On Bottom
Of Next Page

Jeremy is three and has a mind of his own. Your group is making Christmas cards and you've talked about the bright colors of Christmas, particularly red and green. As the children begin to decorate their cards, you notice Jeremy using brown and purple to color his card. You are concerned that his parents won't like his card. How can you encourage Jeremy to use brighter colors? Say:

A. "Jeremy, here are a few more colors - red blue, yellow and green - that you might like to use on your card."

B. "Jeremy, why don't you use red and green on your picture? They are Christmas colors and I know your mom and dad would like them on the card."

C. "Jeremy, brown and purple are pretty colors but they aren't Christmas colors. How about using blue or yellow or red now? Mom and dad would like them better."

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not the best answer because, although you have praised Clara, you have also put a burden on her. She will wonder if you will lose faith in her if she does spill.

Choice B is the best answer because you are expressing faith in Clara and also telling her that spills are no "big deal." You also are giving her a hint on how to pour the juice.

Choice C does not help build Clara's confidence because you are not giving her a chance to do it by herself. It's better to risk a spill than to risk a loss of self-confidence.

You are explaining the game "Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush" to a group of four year olds. What do you say to them?

A. "Boys and girls, make a circle and hold hands. Then we all will walk around and around and follow the directions of the song. You will need to watch me and listen to the words of the song."

B. "Boys and girls, we are going to learn a new game called, 'Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush.' Please make a circle and hold hands."

C. "Boys and girls, listen while I sing, 'Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush.' Then make a circle and hold hands and we'll play the game."

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is the best choice because you can suggest other colors but should not insist that he use them. It's Jeremy's card, and he has the right to decide how to color it without being "put down."

Choice B really lets Jeremy know that his card does not meet your approval and may not meet with his parents' approval. It would not build his confidence.

Choice C, like Choice B, will not build Jeremy's self-confidence.

Answers From Previous Page

Answer A is not the best answer because you are giving too many directions at one time.

Answer B is the preferable choice because you are taking one step at a time. You are allowing them to make a circle, and when they have done this correctly, they are ready for the next step.

Answer C is not a good solution because children learn best by doing the actions. They will get very restless if you make them wait while you sing the whole song and may forget the rest of the directions.

PREVENT UNNECESSARY ACCIDENTS

Be Alert To Safety Hazards

Preschoolers are very busy. They always are running wherever they go. They are quick in their movements and changeable in their activities, and they know definitely what they want to do and how they want to do it. All of this is normal. Their activity and changing interests are the signs of healthy children.

Accidents among preschool children are common. The safety and protection of these children from accidents is the responsibility of every member of the staff. Anything, including the "safe" toys at the center, can become dangerous if used the wrong way. The so-called "safe" toys can hurt children if:

- the large, hollow, wooden blocks are allowed to be stacked higher than the shoulders of the children.
- the swings are placed where children run too closely in front or behind them.
- the slick part of the slides are climbed instead of the ladder.

Only your well-trained eyes can protect the child from water spilled on the floor, sharp edges, loose parts of toys, slivers, and broken toys.

Take Preventive Steps

The primary way to avoid accidents is to remain alert to what the children are doing and how they are feeling. Notice what is happening with the children, and take steps to keep things flowing smoothly and safely.

When children have become tired from too much active play or overly excited by too many other children, too much noise, or activities that are too long, accidents happen. Children are not attentive; they lose control over their bodies and feelings and in a moment they have hurt themselves and others.

Preschoolers are socially active, too. Almost always, they are busy with each other. This social activity takes energy, just as their physical activity takes energy. All this activity will tire any child, especially the young child for whom it is a new experience.

The caregiver can arrange the day's activities to help children from becoming too tired. One way to do this is to alternate quiet activities with more active or vigorous ones. Changing activities from active play to quiet play will help the child avoid tiring. Another way to keep children from tiring is to keep them in small groups. With fewer children to interact with, children are not likely to get overly excited. With fewer children in each group, the caregiver can help the children avoid becoming overly active.

Remember:

- accidents happen when the child is tired.
- accidents happen when the child is overly excited.
- accidents happen when the caregiver is not "on the job."
- accidents can be prevented through planning.

Help Children Learn To Do Things The Safe Way

Preschool children can learn rules of safety and take an active part in teaching others these same rules. Here are some steps to follow in teaching children the safe way:

- explain the rule simply and repeat it often. "This is the trike riding path."
- be consistent in following the rules and in offering praise to the children following them.
- when necessary, step in and assist a child in following them. "I cannot allow you to build blocks any higher than this."
- remove the child from the situation if he continues to break the rule.

Even the three-year-old can know and understand safety rules, but he may be in such a hurry that he will trip over objects on the floor. While the four-year-old can understand safety rules and can even remind others of the rules, he cannot be trusted to remember them every minute. Constant supervision and frequent, firm reminders are necessary for his protection. The five-year-old can help you, by reminding the younger children of the necessary safety rules. He can be taught to encourage the younger children as they follow these rules.

BE ALERT TO POSSIBLE HEALTH PROBLEMS AND HAZARDS

Observe The Children For Signs Of Illness

When children come to the child care center they should be observed for possible health problems. Center policy will tell you what to do if you observe a child with a cough, watery eyes, or other symptoms of illness. Of course, some health problems are hard to detect. In any case, all signs of illness should be brought to the attention of the director. She then can take the opportunity to observe the child and to speak with the parents if a health problem appears to exist.

Teach Preschoolers Good Health Habits

Preschoolers are interested in how their bodies work. They like to learn new facts, and to talk about details. As a result, this is a good age for children to begin learning and practicing good health habits. This is the time when the child will be impressed by the idea of germs and how to control them. The children can be helped to understand the importance of washing their hands after going to the bathroom and before lunch or covering their mouth when coughing. The caregiver can introduce the body's need for rest or naps, as well as for fresh air and exercise. Demonstrations of how to use a toothbrush and help with brushing are important at this age. And, finally, talking about good health habits includes talking about safety rules and orderliness in the center as well as at home.

Make Sure Each Child Has Enough To Eat

Eating habits and food needs of three, four, and five year old children vary a great deal. At these ages, talking about good eating habits is appropriate. Your instruction needn't stop with words. The children can help plan and prepare nutritious foods for meal and snack time. Remember, if a child is hungry and only nutritious food is provided, the child will eat what he needs to grow and to be energetic.

BE SENSITIVE TO CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

In a center, the child is encouraged and helped to grow in healthy ways. Activities are planned for the child's body and mind. Attention is given to the child's health and safety. To complete this concern with the "whole child," attention must be given to the child's emotional well-being as well. In a child care center a caregiver is seen as a trusted friend, as someone who can be turned to in times of need. Children know that their caregiver will "take care" of them.

Sometimes all a child needs is a lap to sit on for awhile to gather up the pieces of his world that may, for the moment, have fallen apart. The physical comfort that holding provides is all it takes to ready him for another venture out into the unfamiliar. You must remember the healing power of just a touch. Touching is reassuring and encouraging. Caregivers need to touch children often.

The caregiver is an important person in the child's life. You can make the child feel important and valuable by listening to his concerns and ideas. Children need to be listened to and taken seriously. The caregiver must learn to listen with warmth, caring and understanding. Perhaps most important of all for the emotional health of the child is to give him the sense that he is liked. We all blossom in the warm regard of another person. Children will grow up to be healthy and happy people if they are made to feel that they are liked and appreciated just for being themselves. Let them know you care by touching them, by listening to them, and by telling them.

BUILDING SKILLS IN PROTECTING PRESCHOOLERS' HEALTH AND SAFETY

Some Often Asked Questions And Situations To Explore

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PREVENT ACCIDENTS?

Preschoolers tend to leap before they look. They don't think of the consequences of their actions. As a caregiver, you need to set safety limits and be aware of hazards. Alertness is the key word in working with preschoolers. You must teach them how to avoid swings when they are in use and also how to get on and off swings. Slides can be fun, but the children must be taught to climb the ladder and go down the slide properly. A caregiver should be near the slide while it is in use to be sure the children are using it safely. Children should be taught how to get on and off see-saws and must be supervised closely. On climbers, be sure the child is capable of climbing down as well as climbing up. Often a child climbs up high on a climber and then can't get down. Have them practice climbing up a few steps and then climbing down. If a child throws sand in a sandbox, he should be removed immediately. Sand can injure eyes. State rules positively: "We sit on swings and slides," or "Blocks are to build with and should be stacked only as high as your chest." Accidents usually happen when children become careless or over extend their physical abilities. When children become overtired, have them sit down to do a quiet acitivity or have a brief rest period. We want children to develop large muscle skills safely, and it's your job to see that that happens.

WHAT WOULD YOU
DO IF . . .

Rona is new in the four-year-old room. She is showing off in the block area by stacking the blocks very high. How would you handle this? Say:

A. "Rona, in this room, we stack blocks only as high as our chest. Come out of the block area and find something else to play with."

B. "Rona, I know you want to show the other children how high you can stack the blocks, but that's too high and they could fall down and hurt one of the other children."

C. "Rona, we only stack blocks as high as our chest in this room. Please take some of the blocks off the top. You may start another stack if you want to, but be sure to build no higher than your chest. That way no one will get hurt if the blocks fall down."

Answers On Bottom
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Jim is running very fast around the playground - in and out and around the swings. You are worried that he is going to knock someone over, fall down, or get hit by a swing. What do you do?

A. Call loudly to Jim and tell him to walk and stop running.

B. Call Jim over to you and tell him to sit down and catch his breath. Tell him that he might fall or bump into someone and knock them down. Explain that by running close to the swings, he might get hurt.

C. Run over to Jim and grab him. Hold him firmly and explain why he must not run so fast. Then let him go.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A punishes Rona for doing something when she didn't know what the rule was. This is unfair and would be embarrassing to Rona.

Choice B is not the best choice because it gives Rona a reason for not stacking the blocks but does not tell her how high she can stack them.

Choice C is the best answer because it tells Rona how high to stack the blocks and the reason for the rule. It does not embarrass her.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not the wisest choice because Jim may not hear you call and, even if he does, he may ignore you.

Choice B is the best solution because you have Jim come close to you and you then can explain the playground rules, without yelling. By having him sit down, you are giving him time to catch his breath and slow down.

Choice C is not a good choice because Jim may think you are playing with him when you run after him and keep on running. Also, you have not given him a chance to slow down and catch his breath. Grabbing him may frighten him.

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN A CHILD IS HURT OR ILL?

In a child care center, children do become ill or have accidents. Be sure you know the center's policy on handling these situations. It is very important - in case of an accident, particularly - that you know what to do and do it quickly. Remain calm and tell the other children what to do while you are taking care of the sick or hurt child. If you are calm and appear to be taking care of the situation, the children will not panic. Speak quietly but firmly. Be sure the director is informed as soon as possible. Fill out any forms that need to be completed while the situation is still fresh in your mind--certainly before you leave work in case any questions come up after you leave.

WHAT WOULD YOU
DO IF . . .

Your group is outside playing and Kendra is hit by a swing. Her head is bleeding and she is screaming. The other children come running to see what has happened. What should you do?

A. If there is another caregiver outside with you, ask her to watch your group. If not, tell the children to follow you inside. Hold Kendra and speak firmly but reassuringly to her. Go inside as quickly as possible and apply approved first aid measures.

B. Pick up Kendra and take her inside quickly. Apply approved first aid measures. Send another caregiver outside to attend to your group or to tell another caregiver who is already outside to watch your group.

C. Ask two responsible children from your group to get the other playground caregiver or to go inside and get a caregiver. Remain outside with the group until another caregiver comes. Hold Kendra and reassure her that you will help her. When the other caregiver comes, take Kendra inside and apply approved first aid.

Answers On Bottom
Of Next Page

At lunchtime Danny does not eat all of his lunch and says he doesn't feel good. He looks pale and vomits. What should you do?

A. Have Danny lie down on the rug while you clean up the vomit. Then wash his face with cool water and have his parents called.

B. Take Danny to the isolation room and wash his face. Have him lie down and call his parents.

C. Have the children at Danny's table move to another table. Wash Danny off and have him lie down in the room while you notify another caregiver to watch your group. Take Danny to the isolation room and ask someone to notify his parents. Stay with Danny until he is calm - then have someone else care for him until his parents arrive so that you may return to your room and help with cleanup.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is best because you are not only caring quickly for Kendra, but you also are taking care of the rest of your group.

Choice B is not desirable because while Kendra is being cared for, the rest of the group is left without supervision.

Choice C is not the best answer because even responsible preschoolers become frightened and may not be able to tell another caregiver about the problem. You might have to wait outside a long time which would not be good for Kendra.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not the best solution because you need to attend to Danny's needs first. Cleanup can be postponed for a brief time.

Choice B is not wise because you need to have the rest of your group taken care of while you are with Danny.

Choice C is the best answer because you are taking care of Danny and the rest of the group also. Your first priority should be the children and your second should be cleaning up.

HOW DO YOU SATISFY PRESCHOOLERS' NEED FOR STRUCTURE?

SET CLEAR LIMITS AND PREDICTABLE PATTERNS

The preschool child faces a world which is largely unfamiliar. We all know from our own experience that the unfamiliar is both exciting and frightening. This is even more true for the young child. Both excitement and anxiety are tiring and uncomfortable for young children who face so much that is new. A sense of structure will provide familiar and comforting boundaries to the young child.

Let Children Know What Is Expected Of Them

A sense of structure is created in a variety of ways. Rules and limits that are consistent create a familiar framework within which the child can operate. The repetition of activities, a planned program which provide some day-to-day predictable events, also helps to outline the boundaries of the child's world.

Children playing by themselves can create their own rules and limits. But in the larger setting of a child care center they rely on adults for making and maintaining the limits. State the rules simply and directly so the child can understand what is expected. If the child makes a mistake or forgets a rule help her to understand what you expect. One way to help a child learn and follow the rules is to tell her exactly what she did that you did or did not like. Use words that describe her behavior rather than her personally. Say things like, "You left some of the toys on the floor," rather than, "You're lazy and sloppy."

Be Consistent In Following Through With Rules

Sometimes we are bothered by children's behavior more than at other times. Sometimes we are just tired of reminding them one more time to do what they are supposed to do.

At those times it certainly is tempting to ignore a broken rule. However, both you and the children will be happier in the long run if you are consistent in what you expect from them. "Being consistent" means:

- reacting to a particular situation in the same way most of the time.
- following through with rules and limits that you have set.

being affectionate with the children regularly, touching them, stroking or holding them, and laughing with them.

Helping children know the rules helps the child begin to set limits for himself. This is the way people learn how to get along in the world.

Also, it is important to consistently praise the child for his "good" behavior. Say things like, "I like the way you put the blocks away, Tommy." When he follows the rules, let him know you noticed. This will help the child to build feelings of trust and acceptance.

Remember That Children Feel Good About Themselves When They Please You

One of the most important and powerful ideas you can have about children is that they want to be successful. They want to learn to do the things they see adults do. Every time you hear a child say, "I want to do that," you are seeing this idea in action. Along with wanting to do everything, preschoolers want to feel good about what they do. When they feel good about what they do, they see themselves as being competent and good people. Therefore, you can assume that, at least most of the time, children want to follow the rules. However, you can help them.

Helping children follow the rules takes practice and some understanding of how children "work" at this age. Preschoolers find it hard to follow the "do's" and "don't's." This is true even though they want to please you. They forget; they copy other children. They test to see if the rules have changed.

If you can be relaxed with the children, helping them to follow the rules will be easier. Try to see yourself not as a police officer but as someone who is their guide, someone who encourages them and guides their actions.

Praise Children When You Approve Of Their Behavior

Children want and need praise. They want to know that they are doing well, that you are pleased with them. Praise is almost always more effective than criticism in helping children follow rules. Well-timed praise and attention are outcomes that children want. If you praise a child for a certain behavior:

the child is more likely to repeat that behavior.

. the other children also will behave in that way.

Praise you give the children can be spoken or unspoken. Spoken words of praise are:

. "I like the way you did that."

. "Thank you for helping me."

Unspoken praise is:

. a pat on the head

. hug

. a hand on the shoulder

Children differ in how they like to be praised. Some children like to be hugged best. For others, praise is being told, "That was good."

Look for what you can praise as a child learns a new skill. Perhaps she is learning to paste. At first you might only be able to say, "Oh, good, you pasted every piece." Later you might be able to say, "You put the paste on very neatly." Still later, perhaps you can say, "What a beautiful design."

With a little effort and a lot of praise, you can encourage children to behave well while making them feel good about themselves.

Praising a group of threes, fours and fives for appropriate behavior helps the children to like themselves and each other as well. Remember, praise and encouragement can be as simple as a touch. Give it often.

Discourage Inappropriate Behavior

Children see their actions as "bad" if the outcome is something they didn't want. These "not wanted outcomes" in a child care center can be the consequences of not following the rules. Perhaps a child is using "not-so-nice" words. This is normal and fairly common for the preschool child. When you ignore the words or the the child, the child will not be getting the response he is seeking. This will be effective in ending the unwanted behavior. Ignoring means not responding in any way to those "not-so-nice" words.

Perhaps a child is playing noisily or unsafely with a toy. An unwanted outcome for the child would be to have the toy taken away from her for awhile. You might say, "I can't let you play with the toys like this." Perhaps a child is running and pushing other children. An unwanted outcome for the child would be a time out from all activity. "Time outs" are useful ways to let a child calm down as well as being an unwanted outcome for the unacceptable behavior. Another way of saying this is that some "outcomes" which a child probably doesn't want and which will discourage inappropriate behavior include:

- ignoring the child's behavior
- withholding a toy or participation in a favorite activity
- having the child take "time out" from all activity

When we talk about inappropriate behavior, we need to think why the behavior is inappropriate. Often it is because another child will get hurt or because it disrupts the group. It is easy to explain why these behaviors are unacceptable. However, why is it inappropriate to eat with one's hands, or use swear words or play with one's sex organs in public? These are not hurting or disrupting anyone. However, we are likely to think of these actions as inappropriate. In general, American culture frowns on such behaviors, and it could be embarrassing for the child to do any of these in public. As a caregiver, you must take into consideration and make the child aware of how our culture views these behaviors so he will not be embarrassed or put down by others needlessly.

LET YOUR OWN BEHAVIOR BE A MODEL

Remember That You Are A Model Whose Opinion Is Valued

The children are learning from you, as well as the other adults in their world, the ways that human beings are with each other. They are learning what is important and what is not. You can be someone they admire and want to be like - you are a model.

When the children like and admire a caregiver, they will follow what he says. They will value his praise and will behave in a way to win that praise. Children will view you as a likable model when you are warm and friendly with them. When you make them feel important and secure, they will be open to seeing you as the kind of person they want to become. When they see that you have fun in your job as a caregiver, they will enjoy being with you and being like you.

Children view a caregiver as a model when he is consistent in the rules he makes, flexible in understanding new situations, and above all, patient in new learning situations.

Finally, children view the caregiver as a good model when he is honest about how he is feeling and shows his feelings in his face, body, and actions. When he is angry, his face shows it; when he is happy, he smiles.

What Kind Of Model Are You?

Check the behaviors below that you usually model and decide.

Make a check mark if you usually...

___ Question rather than tell.

___ Often say please and thank you.

___ Explain and show how before expecting a child to do a task.

___ Praise or compliment, even for small steps in the right direction.

___ Answer questions when asked.

___ State "I was wrong" when you were.

___ Speak to children as politely as you speak to adults.

___ Accept people who look and act differently.

___ Talk about others in positive terms.

Remember! No one is perfect. It's what you do most of the time that counts.

BUILDING SKILLS IN SETTING LIMITS

. . . Some Often Asked Questions
And
Situations To Explore

HOW DO YOU HANDLE DIFFICULT BEHAVIORS IN PRESCHOOLERS?

Preschool children can understand and follow simple rules and limits. They need to have these rules and limits reviewed often. Children of this age like to please and respond very well to praise. If a child after being reminded of the rule does not follow it, then remove the child from the activity and say, "Since you can't remember the rules, you may not play here today. Perhaps you will remember the rules tomorrow, and then you may play here."

A few children will try to get attention any way they can and will do things to provoke you just to get attention. If a child hits another child, pay attention first to the hurt child and then speak firmly, but briefly, to the child who hit. Example: "In this room, you may not hit. Sit in the 'time-out' chair until I tell you to get up." Have the child sit in the "time-out" chair and then allow him to get up. Three or four minutes is a long time to a preschooler. You may have to deny the child certain privileges such as sitting with the group at story time, building blocks, or playing in water. If he abuses a privilege, it should be denied him. However, you should never deny a child food as punishment, nor should you reward him with food. Example: "If you don't take a good nap, you can't have a snack," or "If you walk quietly into the room from the playground, I'll give you a piece of candy." Food is something children need to have and it should not be made to seem extra special nor should it be denied as punishment.

Children are least difficult and most comfortable when they know what is expected of them. The fewer the rules and the simpler they are, the easier it will be for the children to follow them. Before you make a rule, think: Is this a rule I can enforce easily? Will the children I work with understand it? Is it a necessary rule? Children have trouble remembering a long list of rules. Above all, remember, children thrive on praise. They have a right to be respected and appreciated as individuals.

WHAT WOULD YOU
DO IF . . .

Michelle is three years old. While you are reading the group a story you notice Michelle with her hand inside her pants rubbing herself. How would you handle this? Say:

A. "Michelle, if you keep rubbing yourself, you are going to get sore. Please put both hands in your lap."

B. "Michelle, we don't play with ourselves during story time. Now put your hands in your lap."

C. "Michelle, please put your hands in your lap during story time."

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Eliza and Juan are almost five. Usually, they play well together, but today you notice they are arguing over a puzzle. They both want the same puzzle. What do you do to settle this argument?

A. Watch them and see if they can decide themselves what to do about the puzzle.

B. Go over to them and say, "Since you are fighting over the puzzle, I'll put it away, and each of you may choose another puzzle."

C. Ask which one had the puzzle first and give it to that child. Help the other child find another puzzle.

Answers From Previous Page

Answer A is not a good solution because you are calling attention to what Michelle is doing. Also, she may very well have done this before and did not get sore, so she won't understand what you are talking about.

Answer B is a poor choice because you may embarrass Michelle by calling the other children's attention to what she is doing. She also may think that it is all right to do this during another group time when you are having music or games. You are giving her the idea that it is all right except at story time.

Answer C is a better answer because you only are asking her to do what the other children have been asked to do. You are not embarrassing her or frightening her. It is best to ignore this behavior unless it becomes very frequent, and then you should discuss it with your supervisor.

You have a group of three's, four's, and five's in your room for a short time in the morning. You see Maria and Lee, who are five, backing Wilma - who is three - into a corner. Wilma looks frightened and begins to cry. How do you handle this?

A. Tell Maria and Lee that they must not pick on children younger than themselves and to let Wilma go.

B. Tell Maria and Lee that frightening other children is not allowed in your room. Say, "I want you to let Wilma find some friends to play with and you two are to find something you would like to play with."

C. Tell Maria and Lee to leave Wilma alone and tell Wilma that they were only playing with her and that she shouldn't be afraid.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is best. At this age, children need to learn to solve their own problems. Let the situation continue as long as physical fighting doesn't break out. Often when left alone, children solve these problems themselves.

Choice B is not the wisest choice because you are solving the problem for the children without giving them a chance to work it out for themselves. If Choice A fails, then try this answer.

Choice C is not a good solution because you are putting yourself in the middle. Both children will probably answer that they had the puzzle first. Then you are stuck solving a problem unsatisfactorily for one of the children, when they might have solved it together in a way that would have pleased both of them.

Carlos swears at the other children and you when he is angry. He uses swear words to call people names. You are afraid the other children will pick up the words because Carlos is a leader in your group. How do you handle this?

A. Tell Carlos you are going to have to talk to his parents if he doesn't stop using those bad words.

B. Ignore Carlos when he swears and calls people names. Praise him when he talks nicely to the other children. Say, "Carlos, what a nice thing to say to Juan," or "I like it when you say kind things like that to people, Carlos."

C. Say, "Carlos, in this room, we don't say those words, and we don't call people names. If you are mad at someone, tell them, 'I'm mad at you," or 'I don't like it when you do that.' If you call me or the other children names again, you will have to sit in the time out chair."

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not a good answer because it only says that picking on younger children is not allowed. It gives the impression that picking on children their own age is allowed.

Choice B is the best answer because you are stating an overall rule. You are helping Wilma out of the situation and helping all three children find something else to do.

Choice C is a poor choice because you are telling Wilma she shouldn't be afraid in a situation which obviously would be frightening to most three year olds. You are giving all three children the wrong impression.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not the best answer because Carlos will probably still use the "not-so-nice" words and hope you will forget to talk to his parents. You may need to talk to his parents eventually, but threatening him with this will not work.

Choice B is not the best answer because in this case Carlos has been using this language for some time and ignoring it will not help. Also, the other children undoubtedly will pick up the words if he is allowed to continue using them. The second part of the answer is a good idea because you are rewarding him for using acceptable language.

Choice C is the preferable solution because you are giving Carlos some other phrases to use instead of the unacceptable ones. You are also letting him know what will happen if he continues to use "bad" language. Combine this choice with the second part of Choice B and you have a good chance of eliminating the unacceptable language.

SUPPORT CHILDREN'S PLAY

Give Them Freedom To Explore

Once the boundaries are set clearly for the child in the child care center, the opportunity is open for freedom of movement and exploration. This kind of freedom within boundaries allows children to experience and discover. To learn, a child does not have to be taught. When a child is experiencing and discovering, he is learning.

Children are learning about the world continuously and spontaneously - learning how to do things, learning how to be an adult. Children want to learn. They are sponges, soaking up every bit of learning they can. In fact, most of the time what appears to be "just playing" really is learning.

Two children are playing in the housekeeping corner. They are playing with the dishes. If the caregiver watches and listens to what is being said and done, he can discover that the children are learning about the process of preparing meals as well as how to cooperate with each other. The children also may be learning about differences in family living styles. One child says, "We eat dinner in the kitchen." The other child says, "No, we always eat dinner in the dining room." At the sink a child is playing in the water. She pours water from a large cup into a smaller one, and each time the water overflows, she is learning size concepts - science and math. She is learning this without anyone teaching her.

Encourage Them To Use All Of Their Senses

As these examples indicate, children learn best by doing things. Children's learning seems to happen through their bodies as much as through their minds. The caregiver should encourage the children to use all parts of their bodies to experience the world. You can encourage the children to smell things, to hear things, and to see and taste things. You might have a child measure the length of the room with his body. Afterwards you could ask him what the ceiling looked like or how the rug felt as he slid along it.

Give The Child Choices

Every day our lives are full of choices. Sometimes we make good ones, sometimes we make poor choices. But the way we learn to make good

choices is by making them and finding out what happens. In the child's world there are many opportunities for choices to be made.

Making choices allows the preschooler to develop self-confidence. But this is true only when the choices offered him are "positive choices" - choices between two positive experiences or objects. The caregiver really is not giving the child a "positive choice" when she says, "You can either stop throwing sand or you can stop playing in the sandbox."

We can say things to a child so that it seems like there is a choice when actually none exists. Don't offer false choices to children. The caregiver must offer real choices, choices which have equal positive value - "Would you like to play with this puzzle or that puzzle?" Children who are allowed to make "positive choices" have taken the first step in learning to make and trust their own decisions.

Too many choices can be very confusing to children. If you say to a child, "Would you like to play in the block area, the water table, or the book corner?" you are giving the child too many choices, and he may very well forget what the first one was. It is safest to give a three- and four-year-old child a choice between two things. Five year olds are able to choose between three things usually.

When giving choices to children, remember that all the activities in the room should be open to them whether they are boys or girls. Girls like to play with blocks and trucks, and boys like to play with dolls and dishes. Allow children to make choices based on their interests, not on their sex.

Show Children That You're Interested

The way that you, as the caregiver, respond to the child will affect how much she wonders about and explores the world. Be interested in what the child has to say, in what the child is doing. Never belittle what the child does or says.

You may wonder how to go about encouraging a child to learn without actually "teaching" her. It isn't wrong to "teach." We are always teaching children things - ways to be or behave, what

is and isn't important. We point things out or ask questions that will stimulate curiosity. These skills are mostly automatic. We do them from habit. It takes some of that same automatic and frequent response to encourage a child in her own learning. Let the child decide what she wants to learn, notice what that is, and then encourage her as she takes the steps to learn it. Encouragement is gentle guidance. Notice when a child seems ready to learn something, perhaps tying her shoes, and then encourage her as she tries to do it.

ENCOURAGE THEM TO TALK ABOUT THEIR IDEAS

Value What Children Say

Children explore new ideas and activities both by doing them and by talking about them. Encourage the children to share and talk about what they are doing. Choose some activities that you know will encourage the children to talk with each other and with you.

The caregiver must value children's conversations with each other. You let them know you think their conversations are important by not interrupting or interfering. You also let them know their conversations are important by listening to them when they talk with you and by responding

Talk With Children Not At Them

Talking with children will do much to help them learn. Sometimes we wonder what to talk about with these little people. Here are a few ideas. You always can talk with children about what they see, hear, touch and smell. You can talk about what is happening at the moment, events and activities in the center, and even sometimes how they feel about what is happening. Children enjoy sharing what they've done or are planning to do. And you can share with them what you have done or are planning to do.

Listening is one of the most important skills the caregiver can develop. Listening means paying attention to what children say and really trying to understand them. Children can come up with some unusual ideas, ideas which might seem silly or "wrong." Let them talk about these things anyway. In talking, they will be testing

out ideas, measuring them against the world and learning what works or what doesn't work.

Especially when a child is excited or upset, listen to what he tells you. Listening doesn't mean that you have to agree with what you hear or that you have to come up with an answer or solution. Listening means that you are really trying to hear what the child is saying.

Repeating what the child says - or what you think he means to say - tells the child you are listening. It also will help him to better understand what he has just said.

. . . Some Often Asked Questions
And
Situations To Explore

HOW DO YOU GUIDE CHILDREN WITHOUT TELLING THEM WHAT TO DO AND HOW TO DO IT?

To effectively guide children, and yet not appear to be a dictator, a caregiver should give children the opportunity to make positive choices. Children can begin to develop decision-making skills at an early age. As a caregiver, you can help children develop these skills by allowing them to make choices. Asking children questions - such as "Would you like a full glass or a half a glass of juice?" Would you like to play in the block area, the house area or at the puzzle table?" - help children learn to make choices. Be sure when you ask children a question that you can accept their answers. Asking "Would you like to go outside to play?" when the whole group must go outside is asking for trouble. Some children may say, "No", and then you are stuck with having to tell them they really didn't have a choice after all. Allow children freedom to work with the materials provided in their own way. Remember, it is their creation not yours! Encourage children to discuss what they see, hear, feel smell and taste. Preschoolers love to make up stories. Make time in your program for this. By allowing decision making and explorations of the world around them, you are guiding preschoolers and helping them grow.

WHAT WOULD YOU
DO IF . . .

Lance seems to be having trouble settling down and finding something to do. He asks you what he can do and you suggest playing in the block corner. He rejects that idea. Now what do you do? Say:

A. "Lance, I want you to play in the block corner for five minutes then you may choose another activity."

B. "Lance, you may go to the puzzle table or the water table. Choose one of those two activities."

C. "I don't know what you want to do, Lance. There are lots of activities to choose from. Just pick one."

Answers On Bottom
Next Of Page

At sharing time in the five-year-old room, Joey tells about a walk he and his father took in the woods. Joey says they saw a lion and a tiger and an elephant. The other children say that Joey is lying. What do you do? Say:

A. "I think it might be fun to have seen those animals. Let's think of some other things you would like to see on a walk in the woods."

B. "Joey, I think that is a pretend story - not a real story. It's fun to pretend, isn't it?"

C. "Joey isn't lying, boys and girls. He is just telling us the animals he would have liked to see in the woods. Now tell us what you really saw, Joey."

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not a wise choice because you are insisting Lance play with blocks which he's already rejected.

Choice B is the best answer because obviously Lance is having trouble making a choice. By limiting his choices to two, you are helping him focus on an activity without dictating what to do.

Choice C is not a good solution because you are telling Lance you don't know how to help him and that he is on his own. Children do need your help.

Steven is three years old. You are concerned because he does not use sentences - only phrases. Steven comes up to you and says, "I play blocks?" What would you say?

A. "Yes, Steven, you may play with the blocks."

B. "Steven, say, 'May I play with the blocks?' Then you may play with them."

C. "Steven, you can talk better than that. Now ask me again the right way."

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is the best choice because you are accepting Joey's story and expanding the idea to include the whole group. Everyone gets a chance to use their imaginations.

Choice B is all right but does not allow the other children to use their imaginations. It cuts off what could be a creative time for the group.

Choice C is not the best answer because it "puts down" Joey's story, in addition to discouraging imagination in the other children.

Cindy and Bobby are playing in the house corner. Bobby is holding a doll and giving it a bottle. Bobby's father comes in and is unhappy to see Bobby playing with a doll. When he asks you about this, what can you say to him?

A. "This is the first time I have seen Bobby playing with a doll. Usually he plays with 'boy-toys' like trucks."

B. "I imagine that Bobby is the father and Cindy, the mother. Bobby is giving the baby a bottle just as many fathers give their real babies a bottle."

C. "I wouldn't worry if I were you. Bobby is all boy, and playing with a doll once in a while won't hurt him."

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is the correct answer because you are repeating Steven's request by using a complete sentence - filling in the words which he has omitted. Since he is only three, this will give him some correct words to use and help him to speak in sentences.

Choice B is not the best solution because Steven may never say, "May I play with blocks?" and you have indicated that he may not play with the blocks until he does say the sentence. A child can become frustrated having to repeat conversations when he has omitted words. If he becomes frustrated, he might decide it is easier not to talk at all, and this is of no help.

Choice C is a poor choice because you are embarrassing Steven and not helping him learn the correct words.

Answers From Previous Page

Answer A is a poor choice because you are giving Bobby's father the idea that feeding a baby is not a masculine thing to do.

Answer B is the preferable solution because you are helping Bobby's father realize that both fathers and mothers feed babies and that Bobby is practicing a father role.

Answer C is not a good idea because again you are reenforcing the idea that only girls should play with dolls.

PAY ATTENTION TO FEELINGS

Here is a short story that really happened to a preschool girl who needed to feel "cared for." Read the story, and then try to imagine you are the caregiver and fill in the lines below.

Be Aware Of Your Own Reactions

It is 8:30 a.m. in the preschool room at the child care center. This is four-year-old Jenny's first day back at the center since her mother's death one week ago. Since arriving this morning, Jenny has played with the tabletop toys and has not spoken to anyone. You now notice she is playing and talking with Suzy in the housekeeping corner. Moving closer, you hear Jenny say, "You be the mother. Lie down. You are dead." Suzy lies down on the floor and Jenny stares intently at her. Tears begin to form in her eyes and she says to Suzy, "Wake up, I want my breakfast." Suzy continues to lie quietly on the floor and Jenny repeats her demand. When she does not get up, Jenny kicks her. Suzy then begins to cry and says, "You said I was dead."

I feel _____

_____

_____

_____

I probably would _____

_____

_____

_____

FEELING SCALE

Now that you have written down your feelings and actions in this situation, read the following statements about handling feelings. Check either "Agree" or "Disagree" in the lines following each statement. Later on you will have a chance to think about these statements again.

	AGREE	DISAGREE
1. When a child is crying, tell her to stop crying so you can discuss what she is crying about.	____	____
2. Adults should share their feelings with children.	____	____
3. Children should be allowed to talk about how they feel.	____	____
4. When a child is feeling frightened or sad, making him smile or laugh will make him feel better.	____	____
5. When a child feels sad, expressing your concern for his feelings is helpful.	____	____
6. Adults should help their children handle their problems by telling them what to do.	____	____

What you think about "feeling" and how you show a child you "care," have a great deal to do with each other. You can't pretend to feel compassion and caring and expect that the child will believe you. You must actually feel it and show it. All children need to feel that they are cared for, that you care for them. To feel cared for will make the child feel important.

Be Sensitive To Children's Self-Images

Much of children's development during the preschool years depend on how they see themselves. Tommy likes to play on the climbing bars. He can climb to the top without help. When he sits on top of the bars he is pleased with himself and his world. He sees himself as someone who can do what he sets out to do.

The child of three wants to do everything well. He is busy trying out the world. The child of four wants to do everything twice as well. He becomes frustrated when things don't go right for him. The child of five can be a "daredevil." He will try things just to see how they will work.

At these ages children develop self-images by doing things to answer questions such as these:

"Am I strong enough to do that?"

"Can I make it work?"

"Can I run fast?"

"Do others like me?"

Children are like scientists. They wonder about themselves and their world and then test the world and themselves by doing things. They learn by doing.

The caregiver needs to be patient and offer encouragement as the child works through these self-image "tests." By being patient with children and encouraging them, you show them compassion.

Pay Attention To Things That Worry Them

Preschool children have many concerns and fears. Their world still is largely mysterious to them and they are only beginning to figure it out. Often they are not able to tell the difference between a dream and reality or make-believe and

reality. They might be afraid of dogs or other animals, of the dark, of thunder and lightening, or of monsters. They might be concerned about the possible death of a parent or of being away from their parents. Time seems much longer to a child. And what may be only "a little while" for an adult, seems forever to a child. They might be concerned about people who look different. They wonder "What happened to them?" and, "Will it also happen to me?"

Children of this age act out these fears in their dreams and in their play. This is one way they have of gaining control over the unknown.

Pay Attention To What The Child "Says" Without Using Words

People express themselves not only through words but also in the way they move their bodies, the way they interact with others, and the way that they talk. The caregiver must be aware of the whole child. Watch the child with your ears and with your eyes. Ask yourself:

- what is the child doing?
- what is she feeling?
- what is she hearing?
- how does she like to be praised?
- when do I need to encourage and praise?
- what is she learning to do now?

Talk To Parents About Their Concerns

Often parents either sense or experience the child's worries. A mother might remark that she was up three times last night because Tina was having nightmares. A parent might be concerned, puzzled or even angry because her child is starting to wet the bed.

Parents often have few places to go to get advice about their children's behavior. They may express their concerns about a child's fears and even ask you for advice. This is the time to listen carefully to the parent. You will be learning useful information about the child, information you can use to help you understand the child. If the parent asks for advice, you can direct the parent to the supervisor or director for help.

HELP CHILDREN TALK ABOUT THEIR CONCERNS

Children, too, need a chance to talk about what concerns them, about their worries and things that they feel strongly about. You can show the child that you care about him by listening carefully when he states a concern or worry. Often it is wise to suggest to the child that he tell mother or daddy about his worries.

If the concern is about the parent, listen carefully to the child, and then report what was said to the director or supervisor if it seems serious. He then can take the appropriate action if there is a need. Sometimes the child's fantasies have made his world more than he can handle.

Let The Child Know That You Care

It is important that children feel good about who they are and how they are. Let the child know that you care for her just the way she is. Practice seeing each child as a special person - there is no one else exactly like her.

When a child expresses worries or concerns or tells you of a trouble, listen with empathy. Empathy is feeling <u>with</u> the child. It lets the child know you care. Pity is rarely helpful. Pity is feeling <u>for</u> the child. Children are not pitiful creatures. They are strong yet sensitive human beings.

Caring for a child means having the willingness to learn from her, to understand her point of view, and to see how the world looks through her eyes. There is a special treat for the caregiver who can do this. A child's view of the world is full of wonder. All things are new. When you try to see the world from the child's point of view, you, too, will begin to see the wonder of the world.

Don't Feel That You Must Have All The Answers

Many times when children talk to us about their feelings or troubles, we believe we must have some answer for them or some solution to their problem. But most of the time what a child wants is to feel understood, to feel that you have really heard what he has said. Sometimes all you need to do is say again but in a slightly

different way what the child has said to you. When a child feels understood, he is free to move on to other concerns. He also will try to understand others.

A caregiver shows she is understanding by the expression on her face. *Do you look into the child's eyes when he talks?* The caregiver shows she is listening by the way she responds with both words and body. *Do you touch the child often? Do you run off to do something else in the middle of his sentence?*

LET CHILDREN KNOW THAT THEIR FEELINGS ARE ACCEPTABLE

Everyone has feelings. They are our responses to what happens to us in the world. Feelings are neither good nor bad. They simply are. You can show a child compassion by the way you respond to his feelings. Be understanding with all of the child's feelings, the sad and angry ones as well as the happy ones. Recognize how a child is feeling and talk about that with the child.

You can talk about other's feelings, too, with children. Pictures, other children, a movie - all are useful for talking about feelings. Children need to learn that others feel angry, sad and disappointed as well as happy and joyful.

The caregiver can talk about feelings, too. This is one way children learn that it is all right to talk about feelings. You can say things like, "I feel disappointed when you break the rule." Or you can say, "Today I'm feeling tired (or happy)." One way to talk about feelings is to use the words "I feel." If you are not used to talking about feelings this will help you get off to a good start.

It is important to talk about feelings with children. This helps them learn about and understand their emotions. It also helps them find appropriate ways to express their emotions.

Put Yourself In The Child's Place

Sometimes we feel awkward or uncomfortable talking about feelings or encouraging a child

to talk about feelings. Sometimes we feel uncomfortable expressing our own feelings. It will help you realize how important this is to the child if you will stop for a moment and think about the following questions:

- Have you ever told someone how you felt, and were given a hug or a kind word?
- What did it mean to you?
- Now, think what it could mean to the child if you give her a hug or a kind word.

Encourage A Child To Handle His Own Problems

When a child comes to us angry or upset over something or someone we often say things like, "O.K., calm down. You'll have to stop crying before I can help you." It is important at that moment to realize that the preschooler has the need and the right to cry when he becomes frustrated. He will calm down when he is ready to talk with you about his problem. Then - and only then - can you discuss his feelings with him. Give him the chance to talk about his anger, letting him say how he would like to hit another child or how he'd like to knock over the tricycle. He is telling you rather than doing it. And that's a good start in learning to control these kinds of actions.

As the preschooler matures he will become less overwhelmed by such feelings. You then will be able to encourage him to think of different ways to handle a problem. If he runs out of ideas of his own, you can help him along by suggesting some to him. "Did you tell Sean you are mad at him?" or "Did you ask someone to look at the tricycle?" By the time children are four and five years old you can discuss the possible outcomes of the ways they could handle their problems. "What do you think would happen if you tell Sean you are mad at him?" or "Do you think it would help to ask someone to take a look at the tricycle?" Only after going through all these steps with the child can you expect him to be able to choose for himself the best way to deal with the situation. He must learn to make decisions on his own, and you are teaching him the importance of thinking things through carefully before he takes action.

Be Flexible

A child care center establishes the rules needed to protect the children and to keep the center a safe and happy place. When a child comes to you with a problem that is the result of one of the rules, really listening to her does not mean that you break the rules for that child. However, after listening to the problem from the child's point of view, it may seem that you could bend the rule a little without being inconsistent. If it seems that this is one of those times that the rule should be changed, explain to the children what you are doing and why you are doing it. Don't be afraid that they will lose respect for you. They will be learning to be flexible and thoughtful just as you are being. By being considerate, you let the children know that you are concerned and that you understand them. You show them that you care.

Now that you have read about some ways to help children with their feelings, look at the next page and try the feeling SCALE again.

FEELING SCALE

Have your feelings changed? Answer these same statements again - either "Agree" or "Disagree." Then turn the page and look at our answers and reasons for these answers. You may want to turn back to page 95 to see if your own answers have changed.

	AGREE	DISAGREE
1. When a child is crying, tell her to stop crying so you can discuss what she is crying about.	____	____
2. Adults should share their feelings with children.	____	____
3. Children should be allowed to talk about how they feel.	____	____
4. When children are feeling frightened or sad, making the children smile or laugh will make them feel better.	____	____
5. When a child feels sad, expressing your concern for his feelings is helpful.	____	____
6. Adults should help children handle their problems by telling them what to do.	____	____

OUR ANSWERS TO THE FEELING SCALE

Here are our answers and our final thoughts. Would you now feel and act the same way towards Jenny on her first day back at the child care center?

	YES	NO
1. When a child is crying, tell her to stop crying so you can discuss what she is crying about.	___	X
A child needs to relieve feelings through crying. Let the child cry. Discussion is not useful at this point in time.		
2. Adults should share their feelings with children.	X	___
If adults share their feeling with children, the children will learn that having feelings and expressing them is all right.		
3. Children should be allowed to talk about how they feel.	X	___
When children feel free to talk about their feelings with an understanding adult, they are able to relieve the pressure they feel. They also gain an understanding about how they really do feel.		
4. When children are feeling frightened or sad, making the children smile or laugh will make them feel better.	___	X
Children, like adults, need to express the feelings they are having. If they are told to smile or laugh when they don't want to smile or laugh, they may believe that unhappy, sad or angry feelings are not acceptable.		
5. When a child feels sad, expressing your concern for his feelings is helpful.	X	___
Letting a child know that you are concerned about him and his sad feelings gives him a good feeling about his relationship with you.		
6. Adults should help children handle their problems by telling them what to do.	___	X
Children need to be given the opportunity to solve their own problems. If they are not able to find a solution, it is helpful if an understanding adult suggests two or three ideas from which to choose.		

. . . Some Often Asked Questions
And
Situations To Explore

HOW CAN YOU HELP CHILDREN HANDLE PROBLEMS?

Often preschoolers need help finding the "right words" to use in handling their problems with other children. Listen carefully as the child tells you about the problem. Repeat the problem as you have heard the child state it. If he says you are correct, but has no ideas of ways to deal with it, suggest a few short phrases that he might say to handle the problem with the other child. In some instances, you might have to help the child by explaining his situation to the other children involved. Whenever possible, allow the child to solve his own problem, after he has talked with you. Part of caring is listening to the problem, acknowledging that it is a problem and working together with the child to find a solution. Let the child know you care about his feelings and are willing to help him.

WHAT WOULD YOU
DO IF . . .

Abby, who is four, comes to you crying and saying, "Nobody likes me, nobody will play with me." You know Abby is shy and doesn't assert herself with other children. How do you handle this? Say:

A. "Abby, I'm sure that isn't true. You are a very sweet little girl. Why don't you go play with Sue? She'll be your friend."

B. "Abby, I like you. Come on, I'll play with you at the water table. We'll have lots of fun."

C. "Abby, did you ask the children if you could play? I'll bet they don't know you would like to play with them. Decide where you want to play and then go and say, 'May I play with you?' I'd like you to try that."

Answers On Bottom
Of Next Page

Jose, who is three, comes to you and says Lucille called him a stinkpot. How do you handle this? Say:

A. "Jose, did you say to Lucille, 'My name is Jose and I don't like it when you call me stinkpot'? I think you should go to her and tell her that."

B. "Jose, I'll take care of Lucille. You go and play." Make sure that Jose sees you scolding Lucille so he knows you are on his side.

C. "Lucille, go sit in the time out chair until you can talk nicely. Little girls don't say naughty words like that."

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not the best answer because you haven't helped Abby assert herself. You've given her no words to use to let Sue know she wants to play with her.

Choice B is a poor choice because Abby needs to play with her peers and learn to assert herself. She doesn't need to play with the teachers.

Choice C is the best solution because you have given Abby some idea as to why the children didn't play with her, in addition to allowing her to decide where she would like to play. You also have given her words to use to help her get involved with the other children.

You overhear Tami and Cheryl talking and Cheryl says, "Tami, I have a daddy. Why don't you have a daddy?" Tami seems uncomfortable and lost for words. What can you do to help? Say:

A. "Cheryl, I don't think Tami wants to talk about that. Why don't you two girls go play with the blocks."

B. "Cheryl, there are many kinds of families. Some families have a daddy and a mommy and children. Some families have a mommy and children. Some have a daddy and children. There are different kinds of families but they all love each other."

C. "Cheryl, don't tease Tami just because she doesn't have a daddy. That's not nice, and you'll make Tami feel badly. Now go play, girls."

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is the best choice because you are helping Jose learn to take care of situations himself. Also, Lucille is being told by a peer how he feels and this may give her an idea of how to handle a like situation if it happens to her.

Choice B solves nothing because you have ignored Jose's problem and given attention to Lucille. Neither child is learning anything from your actions.

Choice C pays no attention to Jose and may even give both children the idea that boys can say naughty words but girls can't. Neither child is being helped to settle the situation by themselves.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A doesn't help either girl and may make Tami even more confused about her family situation.

Choice B is the best solution because you are giving the girls information they haven't had before and making them both feel o.k. about their families.

Choice C is not a wise choice because Cheryl may not have meant to be cruel, just curious. You have scolded her for no reason. You also have made Tami feel badly and probably further confused her about her family situation.

Here are some new situations with possible ways of handling them. Circle the answer you think is correct now that you have worked through this module. You can find out how much you have learned about your role as a caregiver in a child care center by comparing your choice of answers with our answers (see page 191).

AS AN INFORMED CAREGIVER,
WHAT WOULD YOU
DO IF . . .

1. Carrie, who is three, is having trouble taking turns on the climbing bars. She doesn't want to wait for the other children in line to have a turn and always cuts in front. How can you help Carrie learn to take turns? As a caregiver, you say:

   A. "Carrie, you will get your turn, but the other children must have a turn, too. First, climb up and down the bars, then go to the end of the line and wait like all the other children." Stay with Carrie long enough to see that she will take turns.

   B. "Carrie, I want you to take turns. It is Nancy's turn now, then it will be Tony's, and then it will be yours again. Be sure you wait your turn."

   C. "Carrie, since you don't seem to want to take turns, go play somewhere else until you learn to take turns. In this room, all children must take turns."

2. At nap time Josh's ear begins to drain. He cries and tells you his ear hurts. As a caregiver, you:

   A. Ask one of the caregivers in your room to watch your group. Take Josh to the isolation room and ask him to lie down while you call his parents.

   B. Wash out his ear and ask Josh to lie down. Ask the other caregiver to watch your group while you go to get the director.

   C. Question him about previous illnesses. Tell the other children to play while you speak with Josh.

3. Carlos is a talkative four year old. You notice that recently he has begun to stutter when he is telling you or the group something. As a caregiver, you:

   A. Say, "Carlos, talk more slowly and we will be able to understand what you are saying. You talk so well. Take your time, now."

   B. Say, "Boys and girls, I think Carlos is trying to tell us about his trip. Is that right, Carlos? Now start again, Carlos, and tell us what you want to say."

   C. Listen patiently to Carlos. Allow him to take the time he needs to tell the group what he wants to say.

4. Toby is playing with the other children outside. He runs at top speed towards the opposite end of the playground. Along the way he stumbles and falls - skinning his knee. When he begins to cry, John and David tease him. He comes to you for help. As a caregiver, you:

   A. Wipe away his tears and make him feel grown-up by saying, "Toby, you're a big boy now - so stop crying."

   B. Say, "It's okay to cry, Toby. I know it hurts a lot. Next time, slow down. That might keep you from falling."

   C. Say, "Toby, I know it hurts, but you need to learn to be tough like the other boys."

5. Juan, who is five, is new to the area. His parents both work so he comes to the center after his first day of kindergarten. He looks tired and scared. How can you help him adjust to a new group for the second time in one day?

   A. Tell Juan that you are glad he has come to the center and that you know he will make friends soon.

   B. Take Juan to a table and ask if he would like to draw a picture or look at a book. After he has had time to get settled and observe the group, take him to an area where a small group of other children are playing and introduce him.

   C. Greet Juan at the door and tell him he may play anywhere that he chooses. Allow him to walk around the room and observe until he wants to join a group of children.

6. Cindy, who is three and a half, is drawing a picture of her pets. When you ask her to tell you about her picture, she proudly points to a red cat and a blue dog. What do you say to Cindy?

   A. "Cindy, you must love your dog and cat very much to have drawn them so well."

   B. "Cindy, I really like your drawing, but I've never seen a red cat or a blue dog."

   C. "That's a nice drawing, Cindy, but are your cat and dog really those colors?"

7. Leigh, who has just had her third birthday, has been eating most of the strawberry pudding which was to be used for finger painting. As a caregiver, you say:

   A. "Leigh, you really must like strawberry pudding."

   B. "Leigh, the pudding is for painting, not eating."

   C. "Leigh, try putting some of the pudding on your fingers and painting with it."

8. Kay, age five, is playing with a set of "jacks." She continually fails to catch the small ball. As a caregiver, you:

   A. Give Kay a slightly bigger ball. Suggest that she use it to play "jacks."

   B. Tell Kay that you had trouble learning to play "jacks" when you were her age. Tell her to continue to try.

   C. Tell Kay to put the "jack" set away for today. Say that you will play catch with her, instead.

9. Willie, age three and a half, comes from a family with three older brothers and no sisters. On his first day at the center he is carefully watching Brenda go through the routine of using the toilet. He comes up to you and asks, "Why doesn't Brenda have a bottom like me?" As a caregiver, you should say:

   A. "Brenda is a girl, and girls are just different from boys."

   B. "Willie, I bet one of your older brothers can answer your question. Ask them when you get home."

   C. "Willie, I can see that you are really interested in Brenda. Right now, though, you need to wash your hands."

10. Robbie, four years old, is at the art table trying to cut pieces of paper to paste on another sheet of paper. You notice that he is becoming very frustrated. As a caregiver, you:

   A. Go over to Robbie and tell him that you will cut the pieces of paper for him and he can paste them.

   B. Tell Robbie to make sure he is holding the scissors properly, then let him try cutting again on his own.

   C. Show Robbie how to hold the scissors. Then hold the paper for him until he is able to handle the scissors successfully.

11. Allison always pushes herself to the first of the line when going to the large muscle activity room. She just has done this again. As a caregiver, you say:

   A. "Allison, you would not like someone to push in front of you and neither do the other children. If you do it again, you must go to the end of the line."

   B. "Allison, since you cut in on the line, you must be last. Go to the end of the line."

   C. "Allison, how would you like it if someone pushed their way in front of you? Now go to the end of the line and think about it."

12. Ruby, age three, will not remove her shoes for a nap because she has holes in her socks. The older children have teased her about this. As a caregiver, you say:

    A. "Boys and girls, everyone is not fortunate enough to have new socks to wear."

    B. "Ruby, can you tell the boys and girls that you don't like to be teased about your socks?"

    C. "Ruby, you can take both your shoes and socks off, if you wish.

13. Sarah, a new child at the center, has been watching the other children play on the playground. She appears to want to involve herself in the play. As a caregiver, you say:

    A. "Sarah, a swing is empty and you may use it or you might like to ride one of the trikes that is not being used. Which one would you like to do?"

    B. "Sarah, there are many things to do on our playground. Choose something you wish to play."

    C. "Sarah, I know it is difficult to decide what to play. Here is a ball to bounce."

14. Jaimy is riding a trike against the flow of traffic on the trike path. You are afraid he will collide with another child. As a caregiver, you say:

    A. "Jaimy, turn around, and ride with the traffic or you will have to get off the trike."

    B. "Jaimy, turn your trike around and go the same direction as the other children on the trike path. This way no one will get hurt."

    C. "Jaimy, try riding your trike in the same direction as the other children. If you cannot do that, you may not ride a trike."

15. Kevin, who is five, is cutting out a paper pumpkin with the rest of the group. His scissors slip and he cuts into the middle of the pumpkin. He begins to cry. As a caregiver, what do you do?

    A. Say to Kevin that the pumpkin will look all right even if it isn't round, and ask him to continue cutting carefully.

    B. Say to Kevin that scissors often slip and ask him if he would like another pumpkin to cut. Stay nearby to help if he seems to be having a problem cutting.

    C. Say to Kevin he should have been more careful and that maybe he can make another pumpkin at home and cut it out.

16. Rita, a three year old, refers to herself as "Wita." As a caregiver, you:

    A. Speak with Rita's parents about their daughter's need for speech therapy.

    B. Correct Rita each time she mispronounces her name.

    C. Should realize that Rita will probably be able to pronounce the "R" in her name as she becomes older.

17. Anna, who is four years old, has been drawing a picture of a girl. She shows you the drawing proudly, but you notice that she has not given the girl in the picture any feet or ears. What do you say to Anna?

    A. "I like your picture, Anna, but how will the girl walk or hear what people are saying? Do you think she needs some feet and some ears?"

    B. Look at her picture, then ask her if it is all right if you add something to it. If she agrees, you add the feet and ears so that she is aware that they have been left out.

    C. Comment positively on Anna's drawing as it is - "Anna, what pretty colors you have used in your drawing."

18. Matt, a three-and-a-half-year-old-boy, has just finished painting a picture. Although you are not certain, his painting looks like a horse. He has brought it to you for approval and wants you to hang it on the wall. You say:

A. "Oh, Matt, I noticed how long you worked on your painting. What is it supposed to be?"

B. "Matt, that's a very good horse you have painted. I wish I could paint as well as you. Let's hang it here."

C. "Oh, Matt, I noticed how long you worked on your painting. It will look nice up here with all the other paintings."

19. Following a very active outside play activity you have chosen to have a quiet activity, listening to the record, "Peter and the Wolf." Gena, age three, continues to run around the room, although the other children are quietly listening to the record. As a caregiver, you say:

A. "Gena, it is time to quiet down and listen to a record. Come and sit down with me. We will listen together."

B. "Gena, sit down and listen. You are disturbing the other children."

C. "Gena, I know it is hard to stop running and quiet down on such a beautiful day. I will let you be the first one outside after lunch if you are quiet and listen to the record."

20. It is rest time in the preschool room. Lee keeps humming to himself, and this is keeping the other children from resting. You have ignored this behavior, but the humming continues. As a caregiver, you:

A. Walk over to Lee's cot and tell him to quiet down.

B. Go over to Lee's cot and say, "Lee, please rest without humming. Your humming disturbs the other children. Rest time is a quiet time."

C. Walk over to Lee's cot and say, "Many of the other children are very tired and need to rest. If you are not quiet, I will put you on a cot in a place by yourself."

OUR ANSWERS

Situation 1 A
Situation 2 A
Situation 3 C
Situation 4 B
Situation 5 B
Situation 6 A
Situation 7 C
Situation 8 A
Situation 9 A
Situation 10 C
Situation 11 A
Situation 12 C
Situation 13 A
Situation 14 B
Situation 15 B
Situation 16 C
Situation 17 C
Situation 18 C
Situation 19 A
Situation 20 B

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